THE
ENGLISH REVIEW
JULY, 1911

Pæan of Dawn in May

By Herbert Trench

Song to be sung at the Coronation Gala Performance on June 27th at His Majesty's Theatre by six famous actresses.

IN the darkness before dawn
When dews make grey the field,
And the world is trance-withdrawn
And trees but half-revealed,
O then, high up, above the topmost lawn,
What fountains are unsealed!

Scarce can the eye see light
When the ear becomes aware
That instruments exquisite
Are raining from the air,
While sun and pale moon mingle their delight,
Adorations everywhere!

Who are these, solemnising
In song-mists crystalline,
Between the sun's uprising
And the sheenèd moon's decline,
Glories so far surpassing our devising
Unseen before the shrine?

Whose are these rainbow-hued
Symphonies high and higher
Wafted in multitude
Of choir outclimbing choir,
As though the heavens were some deep-tangled wood
And each leaf voice and fire?

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Hark! it grows less and less,
That rapture nothing mars;
They rise beyond our guess,
Beyond our senses' bars;
They drink the virgin Light, the measureless,
And in it fade like stars.

Earth sends them up from hills,
Her wingèd wishes they!
Wild hopes that nothing kills
To outsoar the young Day,
To shake off all that chains the soul and chills
In one immortal ray!

They ascend, ere the first beam
On dark heaven waxes strong,
To dwell in that blue stream
Of Dawn, and float along—
The zenith and the future all their dream—
And the world's roofed with song!

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Four Poems

By C. F. Keary

I

THE WANDERER

THOUGH now the wanderer's feet fall heavily,
His voice and merry song run on before.
So should it ever be.
The high woods tell of winter, but the hoar
Sloe hath put on his livery of the spring;
And 'mong the boughs I heard a murmuring.

II

A PACK-HORSE BRIDGE

STILL stands the narrow bridge of stone:
But all the pack-horses are gone.
O weary beasts! have ye laid down your loads,
Or do ye travel still those under-roads?

III

THE MARKET

O MARKETERS! ye bring with you
A produce rarer than ye know:
Ye bring to folk 'prisoned in town
The trailing of great Ceres' gown,
Ye bring Pomona's grace:
Ye bring the incense from her shrine,
Ye bring the touch of things divine,
Ennobling every rustic face.
Better than your fruit and flowers are,
Maidens, your healthy looks and free;
To *my* sense as the notes afar
Heard of God Pan his melody;
The immortal air, that breathèd nigh,
Would madden with excess of joy.

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IV

THE HIGH ROAD

How like a shadow do my swift thoughts run
O'er thy eternal face, thou long high road!
Now staying by some dell thou curvest to shun,
The inviolate abode,
'Mid hazel and briar-twine, of coneys fearful,
Of ever-restless blackbirds, robins small,
That pipe their notes so friendly. Yet, O, be careful,
My thoughts, nor press on the stern carnival
They hold to-day. For every branch and sod
Is dew-moist: jailer Nature doth deliver
Her prisoners for execution grim.
Then to the foot-bridge where the rushes quiver,
'Tis that they feel the fingers of a god
Sounding their stops. Ah me! unheard that hymn
By mortals now. . . .
Let sleep such thoughts! For hark!
Up the hill-side climbeth the carrier's van,
The which unseen proclaims the driver's song,
Tuneless, and yet intuitive, divine,
Not less than of the lark
Or hedge-row warbler. Between man and man
To be a link abinding all life long
It is a blessed lot; and such is thine,
O carrier! tuneful only to the soul.
I see thee by the night,
High road, whenas the moon hath hid her face,
And close above thee flits a barn-door owl,
With such faint-whispering wings and rounded sight!
Because a mouse hath left her hiding-place
In yon low drain. . . . Or when the storm comes down
I see thee, and the reverberate rain
Sweeps like a mist along, till thou art grown
A river not a road. . . . I see thee quite alone
In the full night, where never a step is heard,
Nor least low voice of man or beast or bird.
To be so desert, road, I feel thy pain.

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The Changeling

By Margaret L. Woods

When did the Changeling enter in ?
How did the Devil set him a gin
Where the little soul lay like a rabbit,
Faint and still for a fiend to grab it ?
I know not.

Where was the fount of our dishonour ?
Was it a father's buried sin ?
Brought his mother a curse upon her ?
I trow not.

So pretty,
Body and soul, the child began.
He carolled and kissed and laughed and ran,
A glad creature of Earth and Heaven,
And the knowledge of love and the secret of pity,
That need our learning,
God to him at his birth had given.

One remembers
Trifles indeed—the backward-turning
Way he would smile from the field at play.
Sometimes the Thing that sits by the embers
Smiles at me—devil !—the selfsame way.
If only early enough one had guessed,
Known, suspected, watched him at rest,
Noted the Master's sign and fashion,
And unbefooled by the heart's compassion,
Undeterred by form and feature,
Caught the creature,
Tried by the test of water and fire,
Pierced and pinioned with silver wire,
Circled with signs that could control,
Battered with spells that tame and torture
The demon nature,

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Till he writhed in his shape, a fiend confest,
And vanished—
Then had come back the poor soul banished,
Then had come back the little soul.

But now there is nothing to do or to say.
Will no one grip him and tear him away,
The Thing of Blood that gnaws at my breast ?

Perhaps he called me and I was dumb,
Unconcerned I sat and heard
Little things,
Ivy tendrils, a bird's wings,
A frightened bird—
Or faint hands at the window-pane.
And now he will never come again,
The little soul. He is quite lost.

I have summoned him back with incantations
Of heart-deep sobs and whispering cries
Of anguished love and travail of prayer.
Nothing has answered my despair
But long sighs
Of pitiful wind in the fir-plantations.
Poor little soul ! He cannot come.

Perchance on a night when trees were tost
The Changeling rode with his cavalcade
Among the clouds, that were tossing too,
And made the little soul afraid.
They hunted him madly, the howling crew,
Into the Limbo of the lost,
Into the Limbo of the others
Who wander crying and calling their mothers.

Now I know
The creatures that come to harry and raid,
How they ride in the airy regions,
Dance their rounds on meadow and moor,
Gallop under the earth in legions,
Hunt and holloa and run their races
Over tombs in burial-places.

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THE CHANGELING

In the common roads where people go,
Masked and mingled with human traces,
I have marked, I who know,
In the common dust a devil's spoor.

To somebody's gate
A Thing is footing it, cares not much
Whether he creep through an Emperor's portal
And steal the fate
Of a Prince, or into a poor man's hutch—
For the grief will be everywhere as great
And he'll everywhere spread the smirch of sin—
So long as a taste of our blood he may win,
So long as he may become a mortal.

I beseech you,
Prince and poor man, to watch the gate.
The heart is poisoned where he has fed,
The house is ruined that lets him in.
Yet I know I shall never teach you.
With the voice of the dear and the eyes of the dead
He will come to the door and you'll let him in.

If I could forget
Only that ever I had a child,
If only upon some mirk midnight,
When he stands at the door, all wet and wild,
With his owl's feather and dripping hair,
I could lie warm and not care,
I should rid myself of this Changeling yet.

I carried my woe to the Wise Man yonder.
" You sell forgetfulness, they say.
How much to pay
To forget a son who is my sorrow ? "

The Wise Man began to ponder.
" Charms have I, many a one,
To make a woman forget her lover,
A man his wife or a fortune fled,
To make the day forget the morrow,
The doer forget the deed he has done,
But a mighty spell must I borrow
To make a woman forget her son.

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" For this I will take a royal fee.
Your house," said he,
" The storied hangings richly cover,
On your banquet table there were six
Golden branched candlesticks,
And of noble dishes you had a score,
The crown you wore
I remember, the sparkling crown.
All of these,
Madam, you shall pay me down.
Also the day I give you ease
Of golden guineas you pay a hunderd."

Laughing I left the Wise Man's door.
Has he found such things where a Changeling sits ?
The home is darkened from roof to floor,
The house is naked and ravaged and plundered
Where a Changeling sits
On the hearthstone, warming his shivering fits.

He sits at his ease, for he knows well
He can keep his post.
He has left me nothing to pay the cost
Of snatching my heart from his private Hell.

Yet when all is done and told,
I am glad the Wise Man in the city
Had no pity
For me, and for him I had no gold.

Because if I passed the pool in the quarry
And never saw it, the darling ghost
Sailing a boat there, I should be sorry—
If in the firelit, lone December
I never heard it come scampering post
Haste down the stair—if the soul that is lost
Came back, and I did not remember.

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Substance in Poetry

By John M. Robertson, M.P.

I

It would be unfair to hold Macaulay responsible to posterity for a thesis in an essay which was written "when the author was fresh from college, and which," as he protested later, "contains scarcely a paragraph such as his matured judgment approved." But the proposition put in the essay on Milton, that poetry inevitably wanes as knowledge waxes, is still worth considering as a remarkably ingenious attempt, for its time, to clear up a process of literary evolution. Incoherently developed, it suggests much, if it proves little. For us to-day its most obvious weaknesses lie in its evasion of the fact that Milton is pre-eminently a poet of knowledge, reviving poetry in an age of knowledge, and in its assumption that the essence of poetry is fictive imagination, the creating of pictorial or narrative illusion, when at the time of writing that faculty was being freshly and richly represented by a new literature of prose fiction, of which the essayist recognised the vigour. On Macaulay's own definition, Scott's works constituted a great poetic revival; and any one who, with a readier sense than Macaulay's for contemporary art, should to-day attempt to maintain his theorem, would be forced to admit that imagination in his sense strengthens instead of flagging with the progress of culture. Macaulay's argument, in short, exhibits all the confusion that can be set up in German æsthetics by the confirmed use of the word *Dichtung* in its two senses of poetry and fiction. He makes the identification with no sign of misgiving. "No species of *fiction*," he writes, "is so delightful to us as the old English drama. Even its inferior productions possess a charm not to be found in any other species of *poetry*. It is the most lucid mirror that ever was held up to Nature." Setting aside this last extravagance, we must take the passage to mean that vivid dramatisation is one of the main functions of poetry. Then, seeing that France has certainly made a vast advance in vivid dramatisation, alike in the novel and on the stage, since Macaulay wrote, whether or not we allow the

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modern novel to represent life more lucidly than the Elizabethan drama, Macaulay's thesis as it stands must fall.

Behind his misphrased formula, however, there lay a perception important so far as it went—the perception that the extension of knowledge, as distinguished from the mere study of literature, does broadly take away from the esteem with which men regard poetry, and from the zest with which they cultivate it—poetry, that is, in the strict modern sense of rhythmic composition, depending as such for its effect primarily on mode, and secondarily on content; on beauty of speech rather than on depth or accuracy of thought or statement. Unlike the arts of colour and form and sound, poetry always tends in large measure to compete directly with science, especially with philosophy, or with the human sciences, since it works, as regards its content, in their media and partly to their ends. While its metrical mode belongs to its pleasure-giving aim, it is found in all ages intermittently expressing a purpose that is implicitly represented as something higher—the purpose to instruct, to guide, to persuade, to inspire. The mere artist in phrase and cadence is apparently felt even by himself to be socially of less importance than the thinker and the teacher; and the poet would fain be all three. And it is because this purpose is in the main so ill-mated with that of creating rhythmic beauty and pleasure, so hampered by that and at the same time so hindering to it, that minds bent on mastering the matters with which the poets deal are found from time to time, as knowledge chronically widens, drawing away from poetic methods and poetic results.

Abstractly speaking, to be sure, poetry has to-day as free a hand as ever, albeit in a narrowed field; and if men are more exacting and less docile to poetic beckoning than of old, it does not follow that the ancient power cannot be retained or revived. Instructed men probably grow less docile to all manner of didactic beckoning; in philosophy no less than in poetry they are harder to convince or dominate, and for similar reasons. What is clear is that to wield an influence in the old way will take now harder toil, closer thinking, wider knowledge, more manifold power and finer art than it used to need. But even so it takes higher and finer artistic accomplishment to write a lastingly impressive novel in these days than went to the work of any novelist of three generations ago; and the novel, with ups and downs, makes headway not only in technique but in moral and philosophic grasp. It is therefore not arguable *à priori* that poetry, even under its

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special fatality of opposition between moral aim and æsthetic means, cannot in future recover or retain its past status. Supposing it doomed to transiency of moral influence, as are the series of philosophies, it may still attain to the old measure of vogue. The main obstacle seems to be that as men grow increasingly incredulous at once of all hortatory philosophies and of the fitness of the poetic form for ratiocination of any kind, the task of reconquering moral status for poetry grows hard in a twofold degree, so outgoing average capacity. In short, whereas poetry once covered the whole field of culture, and whereas that has step by step been differentiated into history, biography, science, theology, philosophy, criticism, drama, and fiction, there arises the presumption that all forms of ratiocination and propaganda, all efforts towards particular prescription of conduct, all enunciations of creed and gospel, must in time be left to prose, the poet retaining only the field of emotion, which abuts on all the others, but is under a different law.

Before we seek to decide the case in the concrete, however, it is well to be clear as to the æsthetic principles concerned. Without denying to the poetic art any of its possibilities of development, we can deduce from its past what is essential in its relation to its audience. Whether we consider what survives of the hold of the moralist poets over judgment, or what of charm endures in such of their or other men's work as was planned to charm, it is scientifically clear that a poet lives in the measure of the effectiveness of the appeal he can make to the emotions of his readers. That effectiveness varies on both sides: on his side in terms of his art and his matter; on their side in terms of their æsthetic susceptibility and their total culture. But though the effect to be measured is thus a function of many variables, always the final measure of success, of vitality, is the same—degree of effectiveness of emotional appeal.

For every thought, every species of intelligible statement, has its quantum of emotion; this being the reason why it is impossible to draw a line of true division between bodies or periods of verse as possessing or lacking the quality of feeling. Even humorous statement, strictly speaking, sets up emotion. In practice, of course, we restrict the word to serious feeling; but, given seriousness of effect, emotion is there, and the differences of poets and poetries lie in the degree of our accruing emotion, that is, assenting emotion that is pleasurable æsthetically or morally, or in both ways. Of much poetry, for

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qualified readers, the whole emotional result is so faint as to be barely perceptible; that is the furthest we can go in denying poetic quality to any poetry that does not stand for mere artistic ignorance. At the other extreme, a poet may combine for us so perfectly the emotional forces of moving message, exquisite phrase, and noble cadence, as to seem to transcend whole libraries of other rhythmic speech: that is the furthest we can go in crediting uniqueness of inspiration to any verse. Between these extremes, with the means mentioned and in relation to our varying cultures, the poets compete. Now, as "immortality" or lasting status is the test by which all poets would best like to succeed, the practical problem for them and their critic is to divine what themes and what handling will best and longest stir assenting emotion—whether impassioned appeal, or brooding reverie, or grave counsel, or ecstatic cry, or impersonal expression and transcription of things and thoughts felt to be beautiful or otherwise memorable.

II

Perhaps as good a way as any to enter the field is to fasten a moment's preliminary attention on a poet whose intellectual challenge to his contemporaries is specially many-sided, being at once critical, monitory, and lyric. Seldom, perhaps, has he had with him a larger measure of political sympathy than when he championed the causes of Armenia and Greece against the late Sultan Abdul. From first to last he maintained as high a level of execution as of feeling; and the last song was as fine as any:

*AFTER DEFEAT.**

Pray, what chorus, this? At the tragedy's end what chorus?
Surely bewails it the brave, the unhappily starred, the abandoned
Sole unto fate, by yonder invincible kin of the vanquished?
Surely salutes it the fallen, not mocks the protagonist prostrate?

Hark. "Make merry. Ye dreamed that a monster sickened: behold him
Rise new-fanged. Make merry. A hero troubled and shamed you:
Jousting in desperate lists, he is trodden of giants in armour.
Mighty is night. Make merry. The Dawn for a season is frustrate."

Thus after all these ages, a pæan, a loud jubilation,
Mounts, from peoples bemused to a heaven refraining its thunder.

But the judgment conveyed its own confutation. The situation was not thus to be saved for the poet any more than for Greece. The verse is excellent, the moral

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naught. Thunders thus threatened and thus withdrawn are felt to be very much of the stage; and the next parade of them is heavily discounted. Mr. Watson's philosophy, we feel, is here after all a philosophy of rhetoric, making the old play with the worshipped Name, staking all on the afflatus of the tripod, solving the riddle of the painful earth by the science of the chivalrous schoolboy, who sees no wrongs for redress save those of far-off Andromeda, whom a knight-errant crusade may save. To our generation, stirred by the sense of wrong inwoven in the whole fabric of things national, Mr. Watson's political psalmody is hardly more impressive than that of Tennyson in the last generation, when the tripodic vocabulary was sounded on the side of the very Turkey of Mr. Watson's damnation. We can only question, as did Hobbes between Milton and Salmasius, whose style is the finer and whose politics is the worse.

It is the old fatality. The poet bent on great things must needs strive to sing moral truth and inspire right action: it is his congenital burden so to yearn; and yet in the nature of things he cannot so fulfil himself and still be poet. Even if we hold him to be right in his championship—as some of us have at other times held of Mr. Watson—his rightness is not artistically decisive. His truth, the poet's truth, is *too* simple, *too* sensuous, *too* passional, to be any such light for men's path as he deems it: it is in reality not truth, whereof the light is white and still, but the explosion of one or other of the coloured fires of instinct, out of which truth is to be subtly elicited by a slow and difficult alchemy. Therefore it is that we can never certificate poetry either by its reasoning, logically considered, or by its precept, morally considered; for on both lines it must somewhere break down as surely as it is poetry.

The essence of the matter is just this, that poetry is the utterance of an emotion, and that, whereas perceptions of truth and wisdom have their emotional efflux like any other, not only does that grade of emotion yield the poet a much less facile stimulant than the emotions of instinct, but the process of developing the emotion for its own sake ends in reducing it to the level of any other passion, and the truth and the wisdom are left out of the circuit. So the poet is finally and fatally—or, let us simply say, is by the law of his artistic being—no guide, no teacher, but the harp of the winds of feeling, an exquisite word-instrument to give cadence and charm to any or all of the passions of men.

Within that sphere, then, he is presumptively best employed

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when he sings the moods that are not merely of the hour and of the newspaper (though here he may chance to strike the right note and strike it nobly well), but bind in words emotions of the ages which as such may keep men's sympathy even when another order of emotion reigns. If the poet's cosmic emotion be of the older kind, clinging to the vocabulary and the tradition of the tripod, and recoiling from the modern north light or open air of the mind, so be it: he is not only within his right but within his vantage-ground; and we may listen with soothed senses to his song where we dismiss the reasoned shaping of the same plea. We shall not bow to his wand when he would solve the problems either of the planet or of the universe as his artistic father did before him, but we can acclaim in his case as in the other the golden-sounding note, purified it may be at some cost of plangency, but none the less sure to wake the due response in the fit hearer's sense. Such a note is struck in one of his songs:

*THE CAPTIVE'S DREAM.**

From birth we have his captives been:
For freedom, vain to strive.
This is our chamber: windows five
Look forth on his demesne;
And each to his own several view
Translates the outward scene.
We cannot once the landscape view
Save with the painted panes between.

Ah, if there be indeed
Beyond one darksome door, a secret stair
That, winding to the battlements, shall lead
Hence to pure light, free air!
This is the master hope, or the supreme despair.

The poem just cited supplies an excellent illustration and test of the poetic principle. Posterity may or may not hold with Mr. Watson's opinion about immortality; but either way it is likely to value his song. For here he has rightly chosen to be "simple, sensuous, and passionate," voicing a yearning, not an argument, still less a dogma. Just as rightly and as successfully, Mr. Trench in his *Apollo and the Seaman* has chosen to embody both the yearning and its rebuttal in a great lyric allegory, in which argument is fused in vision and passion. Poetry which can thus etherealise a high and moving theme is sure of "immortality," provided only that its form continue to give men pleasure. Form in poetry, indeed, may even

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fascinate long after proximate purpose and purport are gone derelict: it is for form, technique, style, that *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* are read by those of us who still willingly read them. But, *à fortiori*, if diction and rhythm can preserve Milton's theological epics, and, as Lowell has it, "Kindle a soul under the ribs of death" of which are framed Dante's *Divina Commedia*, it can assure continuance for poems which are framed directly from the stuff of poetry, to wit, intelligised emotion. Wordsworth, we remember, made *his* song of immortality likewise an outwelling of emotion, undogmatic, even intractable to dogma.

As these are the right ways, so is the way of Mr. Noyes wrong when, in his quasi-Wordsworthian poem *Michael Oaktree*, he strenuously informs us that

> There is one God, one Love, one everlasting
> Mystery of Incarnation, one creative
> Passion behind the many-coloured veil.
> We have obscured God's face with partial truths,
> The cause of all our sorrow and sin, our wars
> Of force and thought, in this unheavened world.

Here we have but dogma, vociferation, sermonising; and the authority of Mr. Noyes cannot secure for it a respectful hearing from free souls. As little will the rhetoric of *Vicisti Galilæe* avail him: men will not be browbeaten by the bluster of the devotee even if they could be charmed by his chant, which in this case they are not like to be, since its ring is rather of declamation than of the inner life of song.

And this is the final criticism incurred by his epic, *Drake*. There is courage in the undertaking to confute Lowell's verdict that "the epic is dead"; and there is resource as well as courage. No lover of verse can refuse a tribute to frequent felicity of the versification: the good lines are as striking as the bad, which is saying a good deal. He is deft at times to shift the accent; still more deft at quickening the tempo; and there are many good pictures.

But the good work is in the main irrelevant to the theme; while the bad and flat lines, which belong to it, simply cannot be afforded, were the motive of the whole poem as adequate as it is inadequate. They pullulate thus:

> "The Spaniards," he moaned, "the Inquisition!"
> The statesman met him in an ante-room . . .
> Walsingham is empowered to give thee gold . . .
> Fetch Thomas Doughty, Leicester's secretary . . .

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The pinnace "Christopher"
Came next, in staunch command of old Tom Moone.

Their crews, all told, were eight score men and boys.

Burleigh still
Beset Drake's path with pitfalls : treacherous greed
For Spain's blood-money daggered all the dark
Around him, and John Doughty without cease
Sought to make use of all ; until by chance
Drake gat the proof of treasonable intrigue
With Spain against him, *up to the deadly hilt*,
And hurled him into the Tower.

"Daggered" and "gat" and accelerando movement cannot save such annalism as this, with "up to the deadly hilt" thrown in to show that the poet does not understand the idiom he employs.

The total effort has indeed been conscientious. Mr. Noyes has steeped himself in prior poetry to generate poetic diction, as Mr. Phillips absorbed Keats and Milton for the making of *Christ in Hades*, and Elizabethan drama to write *Herod*. He follows Tennyson's manner, and Mr. Phillips' rhythms : in one line about a "sovran thunder-smitten peak" he echoes together Tennyson and Coleridge ; in another, Wordsworth or Milton ; in another Scott ; again Stevenson ; and the Elizabethans are exploited in a lyric imitation of Greene. The fatal trouble is that many a line might have been penned by Peele, and that the choice of the theme might have been his.

Such a theme can sustain an epic only for patriots of deficient culture or prematurely arrested mental growth. A motive that may carry a lyric becomes derisory on that scale. To set out at this time of day in a planned epic to solemnise the story of Drake and to heat the ashes of England's ancient quarrel with Spain is to cater for schoolboys, in a medium which schoolboys cannot relish. The right way to present Drake, for one holding Mr. Noyes' ideals, would be to place him in an historical romance, where history could be as freely wrested as it is in the poem, and where prosaic data could be safely set down as such. To be sure, no readers of an historical romance would endure the peppering of every page with "God" in Mr. Noyes' fashion ; but if it be for the sake of thus continually driving home his theosophy that Mr. Noyes has chosen the verse form, he stands only the more surely condemned. His purpose, on any view, is insularly didactic, and his execution responds to his flawed intention. To him might be recommended the revised canon :

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There are nine-and-twenty ways of making tribal lays,
And every single one of them is *wrong*.

If the epic is to live again it cannot be on the resuscitation of dead ideals.

III

If we seem thus far to have insisted upon quality of theme in a wrong ratio to the importance of quality of inspiration, let us clear the ground by citing some verse which triumphantly eludes some of the most signal dangers of topic. We may thereby solve anew what was so thoroughly solved by Coleridge, the confusion set up by Wordsworth's protest against the opinion that poetic effect is a matter of poetic theme or diction, and by his oscillation between failure and success in handling "everyday" themes. To put it briefly, there is nothing intrinsically anti-poetic in the theme of an idiot boy, any more than in that of a thorn-tree or a solitary reaper: the crux lies in the quality of emotion that the poet extracts from it, as set forth to his readers. Again and again Wordsworth fails to reach the true vibration over themes no less promising than some which he touches with instant felicity. It was not the themes that were at fault. But to say this is not to unsay what has been said of the invalidity of the theme of Drake for a whole epic, or of a dogma for a lyric: it is to note that theme and treatment are concomitant variables, of which either may make a special demand on the other.

One of the most assured successes in modern English poetry, perhaps, was that achieved by a man who was not, I think, a good critic, though a competent anthologist; not a deep thinker, and not a wise though in his way a brave man—the late W. E. Henley. Discussing the evolution of form in our poetry, we have noted his fortunate choice of irregular blank verse: here it is fitting to dwell on his faculty of irradiating the ordinary and the ugly with imaginative diction. It was proved once for all in the "In Hospital" section of his *Book of Verses*, and the power grew with use. In his *London Voluntaries*—the real backbone of the volume entitled from *The Song of the Sword*—we have four deliberate impressionist studies of the actual city:—from a hansom before dawn; on an October afternoon in the Strand; in a fog; and on a spring day; and the triumph lies in the distillation of poetry from every aspect alike by conjoint virtue of imagination, diction, and rhythm. As here:

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And behold
A rakehell cat—how furtive and acold !
A spent witch homing from some infamous dance,
Obscene, quick trotting, see her tip and fade
Through shadowy railings into a pit of shade ;

And here :

Let us too pass
Through these long blindfold rows
Of casements staring blind to right and left,
Each with his gaze turned inward on some piece
Of life in death's own likeness—Life bereft
Of living looks as by the great Release
(Perchance of shadow shapes from shadow shows),
Whose upshot all men know yet no man knows.

The foulness of the fog and the eroticism of the spring day are touched in with the same mordancy of cadence, the same hyperæsthesis of vision, the same sureness and feltness of phrase. And where the theme gives itself out-of-hand to material charm or to pathetic association, the treatment is among the freshest and most moving in modern verse. Between those species of the *macabre* or grim-grotesque and the abstract pathetic, Henley is an artist without a rival. In the former, he may be exampled by the nocturne which begins thus :

A desolate shore ;
The sinister seduction of the moon ;
The menace of the irreclaimable Sea.

Here we have, as it were, poetry at the negative pole, the transfiguration of the odious, a veritable *fleur du mal.* It is palpably neurotic, of course, but we are perhaps by this time ready to take neurosis as a literary factor like another, and to let the result stand for what it is worth. In this case it is art, strange and strong, even though it savour of that side of Henley's culture which enabled him to become, in counsel's opinion, the evil genius of the second volume of Mr. Farmer's slang dictionary. In respect of its neurosis, doubtless, it develops special faults, in particular those of overstrain and obtrusion of cleverness, as when, in a line of the *London Voluntaries*, we have

A lamplit bridge *ouching* the troubled sky.

The free blank verse, too, is not always rhythmically managed ; but the faults are faults, not failures or fatuities ; and the work at its soundest is masterly. In the way of a sure artistic seizure of the most obscure and elusive trouble of spirit and nerve it would be hard to match the poem which begins :

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Trees and the menace of night ;
Then a long, lonely, leaden mere,
Backed by a desolate fell
As by a spectral battlement, and then
Low brooding, interpenetrating all,
A vast, gray, listless, inexpressive sky,
So beggared, so incredibly bereft
Of starlight and the song of racing worlds,
It might have bellied down upon the Void
Where as in terror life was beginning to be ;

or that which has the lines :

and the night magical
Troubled yet comforting, thrills
As if the enchanted castle at the heart
Of the wood's dark wonderment
Swung wide his valves and filled the dim seabanks
With exquisite visitants ;
Words fiery-hearted yet, dreams and desires
With living looks intolerable, regrets
Whose voice comes as the voice of an only child
Heard from the grave : shapes of a Might-have-been
Beautiful, miserable, distraught—
The Law no man may baffle denied and slew.

Between such studies in shadow and sadness, wrought with a certainty of line rarely to be met in work of the most concrete and definite purport, and the hardly more vivid picturing of his visions in sunshine, the permanence of Henley's æsthetic verse seems past doubt. It stands almost alone in literature in respect of matter and manner : and to an after age it is likely to figure among the most memorable literary products of ours. Æsthesis and verbal art can hardly go further. And yet Henley at other points demonstrates as completely as any rival could the fatality of the didactic snare. He too would fain be a moralist, a prophet, to that "age" at which he nervously girded, imputing to it his very own defects. He effectively shows us the manner of his transition from the pathic to the frenetic mood :

Behind, a past that scolds and jeers
For ungirt loin and lamp unlit ;
In front, the unmanageable years,
The trap upon the pit.
Think on the shame of dreams for deeds,
The scandal of unnatural strife,
The slur upon immortal needs,
The treason done to life.
Arise ! no more a living lie,
And with me quicken and control
A memory that shall magnify
The universal soul.

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And how is it to be done? Tell it in Gath: by the strident rhodomontade which begins with a forced mechanical echo of the poet's own felicitous song of *The Spirit of Wine*, and ends with the shout, "I am the sword"; whereto the late Professor Minto rejoined with the fatal diagnosis: "No, only Ancient Pistol." Henley was in fact a professional Tory, to whom the Earl of Beaconsfield was the supreme statesman, and in whose eyes the trade of the machine-gun is the sublimation of the spirit of chivalry. An artistic temperament, nourished strictly on *belles lettres* and the newspaper, was his authority for undertaking to guide the destiny of what his party calls "The Empire," and to classify ethically its home population, among whom, as he had anonymously told us, he "hated as the gates of hell" that political section most recalcitrant to the gospel of "the great Earl" and the code of Mr. Kipling. He thus presents a far worse prophetic miscarriage than Mr. Watson, for Mr. Watson came to the national problem with moral instincts and moral earnestness, while Henley came to it with mere neurasthenia and an ignorance conserved from boyhood. But the general conclusion in the two cases is the same: the artist at his greatest is no thinker, no teacher; and his claim to think and teach in his poetry is but one of the fatalities of his type, one of the burdens of his idiosyncrasy.

How fatal is the error may be discerned by the most unwilling if he will contrast the turgid rant of *The Song of the Sword* with its author's presentment of the poetry of trees by night:

> Now at the word
> Of the ancient, sacerdotal Night, . . .
> They tremble and are changed:
> In each, the uncouth individual soul
> Looms forth and glooms
> Essential, and, their bodily presences
> Touched with inordinate significance, . . .
> They brood, they menace—they appal:
> Or the anguish of prophecy tears them, and they wring
> Wild hands of warning in the face
> Of some inevitable advance of doom:
> Or, each to the other bending, beckoning, signing,
> As in some monstrous market-place,
> They pass the news, these gossips of the Prime,
> In that old speech their forefathers
> Learned on the lawns of Eden, ere they heard
> The troubled voice of Eve
> Naming the wondering folk of Paradise.

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IV

Most poets, doubtless, will decline to follow Henley's lead in the genre of the *macabre*, and wisely so. Like every other order of poetry, it can live by charm alone; and Mrs. Woods, who essays it with unquestionable power, seems to some of us to run signal risks of missing that essential. In the *Danse Macabre* of Saint-Saëns we have the key to its law: it must give a kind of beauty, a touch of joy, to the sinister. Wisely, too, will the majority of singers shun the perils of new rhythms and irregular blank verse, wherein most must fail: it is better to secure a contemporary acceptance than make a miscarriage both in the present and in the future. But the tribe of singers must be reminded that in the absence of originality of form or technique there must be originality of feeling and of utterance to win for poetry any lasting currency. Perhaps they do not ill who are content to make a simple music for the multitude of fairly sympathetic readers: one shrinks from specifying as valueless the many volumes of facile recent verse which still find their public, sometimes to the extent of many editions. A tired woman once wrote to rebuke a critic for a contemptuous characterisation of some verse which to her, and, she was sure, to many others, had given pleasure and refreshment. Happily the makers of the thin wine are in general well enough pleased with their own vintage to be undiscouraged by monitory or minatory reminders of the transiency of most of the popular poetry of the past.

But criticism can no more be suspended than poetry; and those who hope to float far down the stream of time must read the lesson of the lapsed celebrities of so many Victorian as of so many earlier poets—the roll which includes the names of Mrs. Hemans, Miss Landon, Miss Ingelow, Woolner, Sir Lewis Morris, and so many more; to say nothing of the shrinkage in the values of much of the product of even the greater artists. "The great antiseptic, style" is a matter of originality; and originality, as Ruskin well said, is at bottom just sincerity, genuineness—the sincerity, that is to say, of a capable intelligence. But sincerity in song means individuality in rhythm and form as well as in matter. Metre, as Coleridge saw in one of his clear flashes of insight, comes of "the balance in the mind effected by that spontaneous effort which strives to hold in check the workings of passion"—a definition which squares significantly with Spencer's perception of the emergence of rhythm from the simple opposing of a lath to a running stream. The balance, then, must vary for those sincere artists in whose

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case form is more than an accepted mode; and it is in their departures from norms that they can best reveal themselves. To quote Coleridge again, "as far as metre acts in and for itself, it tends to increase the vivacity and susceptibility both of the general feelings and of the attention. This effect it produces by the continued excitement of surprise. . . ." But, yet again, "Metre in itself is simply a stimulant of the attention, and therefore excites the question, Why is the attention to be thus stimulated?" So that the law of poetic effect involves both variation of the metrical or rhythmic process, to the end of preserving "surprise," and the justification of the whole by diction and purport. To these stipulations we always return.

I know not what Mr. Watson would say were he told that for some of us the most telling effect in the crescendo of one of his most pleasing poems is just the "writhe" in the rhythm of such a stanza as this:

> The South shall bless, the East shall blight;
> The red rose of the dawn shall blow;
> The million-lilied stream of Night
> Wide in ethereal meadows flow;
> And Autumn mourn, and everything
> Dance to the wild pipe of the Spring.*

But so it is: the stanza would have missed its chief charm had the last line been purely iambic, or nearly so, like its predecessor. And who shall say how far a sensitive heed to what we may term emotional veracity of rhythm can save the artist from the snare of the humdrum, inherent in the nature of protracted metre? That risk may be illustrated in the case of a lamented poet who in his best work felicitously met the central requirement of poetic art, which is that the pretension to guide and command be at its slightest, being controlled by sheer zest in song and a dramatic altruism. Such a case—up to the time of his complete transformation into a self-conscious prophet—was that of John Davidson, the most cordial and the most transparent of the last generation of poets. In mere fullness of artistic response to life he is perhaps the first; for while Mr. Watson and Henley wrote but self-expressive verse and criticism, Francis Thompson only verse, and Mr. Yeats verse and poetic prose, Davidson tried his hand in drama, tragi-comical, historical and pastoral; in romance of several sorts; and in the prose of *A Random Itinerary*, as well as in dramatic ballads and eclogues. And in all there is a full-handedness, an opulence of utterance, and at the same time a freedom from what

* *The Father of the Forest.*

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Nietzsche calls "moralic acid," that go far to win leniency for his laxities of workmanship, and entitle him to peculiar favour at the hands of those who love poetry first and last for its own sake. In this last regard he stands out noticeably from his leading contemporaries. His successes seem never to be the product of labour, or of slow secretion and selection; with him all is spontaneous and of first thought, and the effect, sooth to say, is sometimes motley enough. In his best-known ballad there are stanzas which, in triumphant and surprising rightness of expression, no artistic toil could better, and others which a schoolboy might hesitate to pass; and again, in one of his later eclogues, we pass from the most delightfully canorous movement to doggerel from which Sir Lewis Morris would have recoiled. And yet again, in a late ballad, the afflatus and the hiatus affect us like a breach in a picture or a fiasco in a song.

In such contrasts we have a clue to our poet's structure. Out of the fullness of his heart his mouth spoke; he was no strenuous devoted craftsman nor brooding specialist, but a born singer. Hence his right to say of most other men, as he does in a little volume of prose jottings, that "the want of poetic power is the impelling force in the case of most versifiers: they would fain be poets, and imagine that the best way is to try to write poetry, and to publish what they write." For his part he reached excellence through the simple natural clarification of his output by the forces of time, of growth, of inevitable intellectual experience. He collected in one volume his early experiments in poetic drama—*Bruce*, a tragedy; *Smith*, a farce; *Scaramouch at Naxos*, and so on—whereof it can but be said that they are all genial mistakes, all foredoomed reversions to an exhausted convention, all full of fluent young talent, and all finally unreadable for grown men. They stand on the other—the southern—side of Parnassus from the early work of Mr. Watson, his filed epigrams, his fine-fingered fantasy of *The Prince's Quest*. It was after coming to take his life's chance in London that Davidson grew into self-possession and learned to take his own seizure of life in artistic forms as proper to him as his gift of words. And it consisted happily with his unanxious attitude to art that where his contemporaries in song were given, as we have seen, to fulfilling themselves by playing the prophet and the law-giver for their day, Davidson was until his latter years content to give his moral message, sometimes revolutionary enough, in the individual way of a poet declaring his feelings, and only indirectly concerned with its possible effects on others.

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Davidson is thus only the more certainly a poet. And this is the happy secret of the success of such things as his *Fleet Street Eclogues*, strains of song in which the cry of the true nature-lover sounds across one after another of the themes of town-men's talk, making us hear now the "oboe voices" of the blackbirds and again the "husky whisper of the corn." There is perhaps nothing more characteristic of his gift than this recurrent vision of green nature through every human problem he treats; the memory of it coming upon us indifferently in the *Ballad of a Nun* or the *Ballad of a Coward*, by way of framework or of contrast, of illustration or of antithesis. And withal, in virtue of the same spontaneous impressionism, he has given to much of his verse a moral momentum that is lacked by the most directly didactic work of other men. Without heroics and without sentiment, he puts half the trouble of the modern consciousness in one grim page of one of those later *Eclogues* which bring to the lyrism of the earlier a foil of unlooked-for tragic intensity.

The only question, then, for the friendly readers of this poet, is whether his unpruned exuberance can keep for itself in the coming years the goodwill it commanded in its day; whether the unborn generations, pressed upon by ever new supplies of art and science, can give more than a momentary ear to this wood-note that to us had seemed so fresh and so genuine. For its own day it has made good the point of Davidson's own epigram, that "except to the poet, the age of poetry is always past"—made it good by accepting so far, in virtue of natural vocation, the limitation set upon the poet's jurisdiction by the widening modern judgment. The poet who is content not to be prophet or law-giver has so far certainly not lowered the real status of the tribe. But the fact that he could lapse from inspiration and miss tolerable craftsmanship more frequently and fatally than any of his chief competitors is the clinching justification of the canon that the true artist must make form and substance sustain each other, his sincerity of emotion preserving form, and the love of form purifying his matter.

V

If the devotee of "the message" be still impatient, still intolerant of the cult of technique, he may perhaps be conciliated by a full admission that the pursuit of mere strangeness is wholly vicious, and that the concern for originality may easily degenerate into that. Let us lay the cards on the table.

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Even the powerful innovator will miss charm in some of his experiments: Henley did so; Mr. Trench has done so; and some other modern poets have reached mere artistic depravation in the effort to be uncommon. If Shakespeare can at times make us conscious of the error of positively shunning simplicity, lesser performers following the same bent are like to incur reprobation. Rossetti forfeited much, in poetry as in painting, by the passion for abnormality; and even the ambition of securing poetic colour by "beautiful substantives," such as the names of precious stones, is a perilous one. Mrs. Taylor, who carries that proclivity to the length of such a phrase as "days of lapis lazuli," exemplifies the danger.

Perhaps the most striking case of shipwreck in the quest of poetic strangeness is that of the late Francis Thompson. There is nothing in literature to compare with the gradient of deterioration that Thompson travelled in a few years' time. Fanny Burney in a generation passed from a style of pleasant artificiality to one of insupportable Johnsonese; and Meredith in about the same time evolved from the manner of *The Shaving of Shagpat* to that of *One of Our Conquerors*. But in some three years' lapse Thompson passed from a style of Donneish obscurity, lit up by gleams of genius, to one savouring always of extravagance and often of Bedlam, in which the rare flashes of inspiration become almost more afflictive than the surrounding absurdity by force of contrast and retrospect. His first volume, though panegyrised by the late Mr. Coventry Patmore and others to an extent that implied special motives, was unquestionably remarkable, and set up a passing fashion of archaistic rhythms even in alien schools. His second volume was to some of us unreadable. His third was a mere monstrosity, being mostly compounded in a jargon revolting to reasoning men of any school, and fitted to send us all back, under the editorial conduct and adjuration of Mr. Henley, to Byron, or, if need be, to Bowles.

Here, again, perhaps, the perverting factor was the passion to be prophetic, to impose certain dreams and visions on the world, not artistically, for what they are, but didactically, for sayings inspired. If so, there need hardly be any more question about the hopelessness of the propagandist purpose as a main motive in art, as anything more than a touch of ethical self-revelation in a non-didactic undertaking. Always we come back to the truth underlying the often misconceived formula of "Art for Art's sake." The solution of the embroilments over that war-cry is just this: that Art, while

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remaining true to itself, to the artistic purpose, may work on moral or non-moral matter, may play on high mental levels or on low, and may in some cases seem to hold a moral purpose as essential, when in reality it has only expressed a moral emotion for what it is, as fitly as it might express a sensation or a passion, a desire or a despair. The greatest artist, broadly speaking, is he who artistically compasses most of the mental field, transmuting into art all orders of consciousness, abstract and concrete, visual and imaginative, moral and animal. But, once more, should one set himself to be artistically great in the moral field by putting moral prescription and argument in place of or in addition to moral emotion, he must fall somewhere between the two stools of reason and æsthesis, harp he never so warily.

Even without that erring ambition to misguide him, of course, the artist may fall into artistic sin in the craving for singularity. Mr. John Masefield, by common consent, is a poet in grain: his very prose shows as much by its curious lack of periodic structure; and in his latest volume, though he makes us think at times of Mr. Trench's rhythm and Mr. Noyes' metre, he reveals a rare variety of fresh inspiration, electrifying old metres with fresh feeling or lifting their too familiar tune to the height of a rhythm of time, as in *Prayer* and *The Dead Knight*. But here is a stanza of an older lyric of Mr. Masefield's in which I can find no grace of rhyme or reason, rhythm or metre:

> I have drunken the red wine and flung the dice,
> Yet in the noisy ale-house I have seen and heard
> The dear pale lady with the mournful eyes,
> And a voice *like that of* a pure grey [why *grey?*] cooing bird.

Its inspiration I take to be drawn from the example of one poem by the late Ernest Dowson, the rhythm of which has been pronounced by Mr. Symons to be "probably immortal." It is certainly fascinating:

> I have forgot much, Cynara, gone with the wind,
> Thrown roses, roses riotously with the throng,
> Dancing to put your pale lost lilies out of mind;
> But I was desolate, and sick of an old passion:
> Yea, all the time, because the dance was long:
> I have been faithful to thee, Cynara, in my fashion.

Mr. Masefield's stanza seems to be an echo of that; but Dowson's is subtly musical and his is not. It cannot be rightly read by feet or by beat, by bar or by line: it is a suite

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of four irregular lines, reducible to no tempo. And as the poem is not at all "inevitable," being a "vision" meaning nothing in particular, it seems fated to go overboard. Better any *symmetria prisca* than a strain all at sixes and sevens, telling of a mere failure to reach rhythm: we cannot be expected to follow and memorise the unmusical, the halt. Now, Mr. Masefield rather persistently seeks the effect of surprise in this way: here, for instance, in these pseudo-Sapphics:

> Silent are the woods, and the dim green boughs are
> Hushed in the twilight: yonder, in the path through
> The apple orchard, is a tired ploughboy
> Calling the kine home.

The other stanzas go not better, but worse:

> A bright white star blinks, the pale moon rounds, but
> Still the red, lurid wreckage of the sunset
> Smoulders in smoky fire, and burns on
> The misty hill-tops . . .

Such verse cannot keep us company: it is doomed as surely as the hexameters of the Elizabethans. You probably cannot make valid verse with matter not good enough for prose; but it is certain that, if you ever can, you must regenerate it in the fire of cadence. This, as it happens, Mr. Masefield can do with real craftsmanship, as in his rhymed stanzas *On Malvern Hill*. All the stops are handled there: a time-rhythm, controlled in irregularity; a simply strong theme; a purely emotional reverie; terse and vivid presentment, and dexterous finish. One can imagine the Museless mind carping at the auto-suggestion of the rhymes—an old artistic pitfall; and it will have to be conceded that Mr. Trench courts impeachment when he rhymes "swans" with "bronze" in two widely different poems. But if these be possible cavils, all the more clear is the saving grace of such a loyalty to feeling as shall expel forced rhyme and fuse meaning with form. Achieved as Mr. Trench achieves it in *Daughters of Joy* and *The Questioners*, in his *New Poems*, such fusion can become something inevitable, haunting, unforgettable.

It can even stamp beauty upon work that commits the double error of imitating the antique and obtruding a pseudo-philosophy, as is done by Mr. Hewlett's latest performance, *The Agonists: a Trilogy of God and Man*. In Mr. Hewlett the craving for the setting of the past, the mediæval, the archaic, is so overmastering that he evidently "can no other";

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so that in his case the selection of such old-world themes as Minos and Pasiphae, Ariadne and Dionysos, Hippolytus and Phædra, and the old-world form of the choric drama, means a possibility of imaginative force where almost any other performer would have given us an academic exercise. Living as he does habitually in remote environments and distant experience, he has been able to bring to bear on even the "tragic and monstrous" themes and structure of mythological Greek drama the newest resources of verbal art. Even in committing the fallacy of seeking to confute "the fallacies which underlay the ancient conceptions of Godkind and Mankind," he "realises exactly that a play cannot succeed upon philosophical excellence." Rightly feeling that "there is no metrical system but that conditioned by the subject," he has discarded "the burden of the iambic pentameter," and has masterfully wrought varying lengths of blank verse, and vitalised his choruses with time-rhythm. The result is something more male, more austerely beautiful in its archaism than *Atalanta in Calydon*, something as perfect in its way as can be made of such matter. And yet it will not live! Mr. Hewlett, with his connatural bias to the bygone, his inability to live artistically in the present, cannot learn that, form apart, the only psychic way to make the antique past live in poetic drama is Shakespeare's way, or, at a pinch Goethe's way, the way of *Coriolanus* and *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, where the "philosophic underflow" is that of human experience, not of a pragmatic theosophy. In their different ways Mr. Phillips found the secret in *Christ in Hades*, Mr. Noyes in his *Orpheus and Eurydice*. Modernity is a matter of substance as well as of form. The men and women in Shakespeare's transcription of antiquity are "drenched in flesh and blood" as he knew them, and breathe the very breath of universal life. Mr. Hewlett has but given us in each play of his trilogy an elusive Galatea that, when the momentary illusion of consummate form is over, shivers back into marble, to be left on her pedestal in our outer hall. What Keats could not compass with *Hyperion*, he cannot attain to with the horrors of misunderstood mythology.

VI

The future of poetry, then, must lie in the loyal artistic rendering of spontaneous sensation and emotion as such, to the end of making them contagious by their charm, and with as little surrender as may be to the instinct of propaganda,

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whose proper field and art are irrevocably cast in the great kingdom of prose—a realm newly enriched in these latter days by sundry masters, but visibly capable of an incalculable tillage. And while the matter of prose is as various as science, that of poetry, it would seem, cannot well be more various than feeling, and is therefore to be found not so much by way of discovering new themes as of heightening the beauty and the fitness of expression. It is told of Tennyson that in his youth he recognised that the time was past for triumphs of fecundity, and that success for him must lie in doing things more perfectly than his predecessors. It was a wise decision, and never more clearly so than in the light of the more facile work of his garrulous old age, of which so little is immortal, so much immemorable. Browning, always copious, went far to disrate himself by growing ever more laxly so, with time and vanishing diffidence. Wordsworth had gone the same way; and it is a little doubtful whether Arnold would not have followed, but for the sheer failure of his faculty, of which the last efforts are so distressingly uninspired. William Morris, always able, with his greater industrial energy, to spur himself into the rhythmic pace, wrought out a tale of volumes which the coming ages certainly will not con; and Swinburne was foredoomed to the same self-frustration by his fatal plethora of phrase. He is perhaps the most signal illustration of the danger of superabundance, the bulk of his work testifying, above all things, to simple temperamental passion for song, backed up by a store of speech that could tire out anything but the passion in question. Rarely does he fail to bury emotion in words, like some wild sybarite bent in dead earnest on giving and finding bliss under an endless rain of rose leaves. So strong, indeed, is the primary appetite for the pleasure of mere multiplied metre and rhyme, applied to the utterance of hot elementary passion, that his verse may very well in time to come keep for the multitude of less developed readers some such spell as that of Byron still seems to possess for common tastes. But in that case it will have vogue without status, hardly a more enviable meed than that of status without vogue.

The last, perchance, might be the lot of some less redundant and less obvious verse; for instance, the bulk of that of Rossetti, of which the bane is labouredness, involution, lack of disengagement, congestion of image, rather than superfœtation of phrase, though it runs always more to verbalism than to thought. The difficulty will be as to whether such toilsome work as the most ambitious of his, in which the

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subjective trouble, for sheer want of mental purpose, is never clarified, and the form is painfully imposed on the matter rather than evolved by it—whether such work as this can ever keep critical status. The struggle and turgidity of the bulk of the sonnets, in comparison with the felicity of such things as the limpid translation of Villon's *Ballade des Dames du temps jadis*, the irresistible if ill-pruned *Blessed Damosel*, and the lovely *Old Song Ended*, force us to the verdict that his thinking power was inadequate to more complex themes, and lost itself in confused fantasy. His normal thought, as in *Jenny*, is not meditated and distilled enough for permanence; the rest is mostly undigested and indigestible. And if Rossetti fall out of the troop many another must go with him—some accomplished amateurs because they were not enough in earnest; some zealous performers because they were not duly self-critical, or because they lacked the due sinew and stature.

It is chilling to think how much intelligent and talented modern production is steadily drifting to the back shelves of the library of the nations. It is with poetry as with painting: a great annual flowering mostly ends in corners of unvisited drawing-rooms. Buchanan somehow failed to ripen and deepen; Mr. Patmore's well-managed gift of individualising and etherealising the commonplace may retain for him a measure of popularity, but hardly of ardent cultus; Mr. Austin has already ceased to seem important; Sir Lewis Morris has faded from even the common consciousness. He who would earn a higher fortune than these must condense and intensify his effort, must offer less matter, with more art; and, if he would feel secure, had better seek and find his ideal in significance and concision. The pressure towards higher technical standards is irresistible: the neophyte must obey it or sink before it. One skilful man of letters, Mr. Gosse, who has performed with artistic credit in verse as in prose, throws out a warning hint that the very worship of the ideal may generate impotence:

> If we could dare to write as ill
> As some whose voices haunt us still
> Even we, perchance, might call our own
> Their deep enchanting undertone.
>
> We are too diffident and nice,
> Too learned and too over-wise,
> Too much afraid of faults to be
> The flutes of bold sincerity.*

* *Impression*, in *Russet and Silver*.

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It is a pleasant counsel of imperfection; and, indeed, there may be a kind of failure through restraint and precaution, as well as through the want of them. The integrity, the severely chastened art of Mr. Bridges, may fall short of compulsive charm as far as does the torrid exuberance of Swinburne. Even such an artist as the late Lord de Tabley, patiently stitching a breadth of fine tapestry, may be working rather for the virtuosi of the future than for the liberal society of readers of all-round culture where all artists, it is probable, would fain be at home.

But in these cases what is amiss—if anything amiss there be—is rather relative defect of organic force than positive excess of precaution. When Rossetti's diction makes upon us the effect of dead mosaic rather than of living speech, it is not that he is too careful in arranging his words, but that his brain has fallen short of the vital vibration which lends to a rhythm the glow of sincere meaning. The survivors in song, then, will be, first and foremost, those whose genius most surely kindles to its every task; whose inward fire can most invariably raise their pulse to the lyric beat; whose range of interest and of execution is the widest; and who all the while can command themselves to the highest discipline of impulse, the severest selection of performance. A frequent combination of all these elements of lyric greatness is, of course, not to be looked for; and what will commonly be seen is a competition between the gifts of matter and of form, the impulses of extension and of intension.

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The Intercessor

By May Sinclair

I

They had told him that he couldn't miss it. There wasn't another house near it for a good mile. He knew where the bridle-path from the hill road struck the lane in the Bottom. It was down there, with a clump of ash-trees close up against the back of it, trying to hide it.

Garvin followed the path. It went straight over the slope of the fields, hemmed in by stone walls, low and loose piled, part of the enormous network of stone flung across the north country to the foot of the fells.

At the end of the last field a wild plum-tree stood half-naked on a hillock and pointed at the house. All that Garvin could see was a bald gable-end pitched among the ash-trees. It was black grey, like ash bark drenched with rain.

It stood, he now saw, in a little orchard of dead trees, shut in from the fields by walls, low and loose piled, a plot so small that it showed like a loop in a mesh of the stone network.

As he approached the place he had the distinct thrill of fascination that seized him always in the presence of old things.

Garvin was by nature and profession a hunter of old things, of old houses, old churches, old ways and superstitions. He had had his nose in a hundred parish registers, sifting the dust of oblivion for a clue to some forgotten family. He was gifted with an implacable persistence in following up a trail, a terrible and untiring industry in minute research. His almost legal precision had served him well when he left an estate agent's office in Pall Mall to work for the Blackadders on their County History.

The Blackadder enterprise was so vast that Garvin in his operations was a mere fly-wheel of the machinery. But it fired him; it gave him scope. As an estate agent, selling land for building lots, Garvin had done violence to his genius. The dream of Garvin and his passion was for wild open stretches, everlastingly unbuilt on, for moors and fells, for all places that have kept the secret and the memory of the ancient earth. It was this queer, half-savage streak in the respectable Garvin that marked him as *the* man for the Craven country.

He had travelled the district all summer, working up his notes at night in small humble hotels and wayside inns. But when it came to the actual writing of his section, Garvin had taken rooms in a village in Craven. He had insisted on two things only when he took them, that the house must be old and that there must be no children in it. That was in

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July. And before August other lodgers had come and had brought many children. Garvin was driven out. He said he *must* have a place to himself, and was told, fairly and squarely, in broad Yorkshire, that he couldn't have it; leastways, not in August. If he wasn't satisfied where he was, he could go to Falshaw's in the Bottom. Likely enough he'd have it to himself there as much as he wanted.

Garvin ignored the hint of perdition. He inquired placably if Falshaw's was an old place, and was told that it was "old enough." He asked also whether at Falshaw's there would be any children. No (this time it was palpable, the sidelong, sinister intention), there wouldn't be; leastways not in August nor yet September—if all went well with Falshaw's wife. Garvin judged that the state of Falshaw's wife had acted somehow as a deterrent to tourists. It had kept Falshaw's empty. That was good. Anyhow he thought he'd risk it.

It was early evening in the first week of August that he set out for the house in the Bottom.

It didn't strike him (for the approach was sideways through a little gate in the low wall), it didn't strike him all at once that the house was not "old enough." But it struck him very sharply as he entered and took in, slant-ways, its bare rectangular front. So far from being old enough (for Garvin) it was not old at all, if you went by years. He had given it about a hundred at sight, when he came upon its date graved above the lintel of its door: 1800, and the initials of its founder: E. F.

If you went by years—but this gaunt and naked thing had grown old before its years. It wore the look of calamity, of terrible and unforgetting and unforgotten age. What it did was to throw back its century into some tract of dark and savage time.

He stepped back a few paces to get a better look at it. The unsheltered door stood open; its flagged passage, flush with the ground outside it, showed like a continuation of the orchard path. At the further gable-end its wall was broken half-way by the roof of a pent-house. A clump of elder bushes here were the only green and living things about the place. It stood before Garvin, dark and repellent in its nakedness, built from floor to roof of that bleak stone that abhors the sun, that blackens under rain. The light of the August evening was grey round it; the heat of the August day lived only in the rank smell of the elder bushes by the pent-house wall. It seemed to Garvin that the soul of eighteen hundred hung about him in the smell of the elder bushes. He found it in the blurred gleam of the five windows, deep set and narrow, that looked out on the orchard of dead trees. Garvin's delicate sense of time was shaken under their poignant, impenetrable stare, so that the figures 1800 troubled him, stirred in him the innermost thrill of his passion for the past.

He knocked with his stick on the open door. The sounds struck short and hard. Nobody answered. Garvin took another look at the house. The wall-space to the left of the threshold was narrow and had but one window, which he had passed as he entered. The long, two-windowed wall on the right bounded the house place. Garvin saw

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through the open door that this interior was diminished by two wooden partitions, one of which formed the passage, the other shut off the staircase at the back. The door at the end of the passage was closed. So was the door on his left, leading into the small room he had passed. The door in the partition on his right stood ajar, so that when he knocked again he heard the loud scraping of a chair on the stone floor. Somebody had got up and was probably listening there, but nobody came. He knocked again on the inner door imperiously.

This time he heard footsteps. They advanced heavily to the door and paused there. The door swung to with a click of the latch and the footsteps retreated. They trailed off somewhere into the depths of the house to the back. Somebody called out there to somebody else, " Onny ! Onny ! " and Garvin waited.

Some moments passed before the door at the end of the passage (the door into the backyard) opened, and a girl, whom he took to be Anny, came to him. She was a young girl, sturdy and full-blown in the body, florid and fair in the face ; in all commonplace and a little coarse. She came heavily, with no sign of interest or of haste, but staring at Garvin with her thick grey eyes.

He asked if he could have rooms. Anny didn't know, she was sure.

Would she be good enough to find out ?

She didn't know. He could find out himself. Ooncle was in the tool-shed.

With more good-will than her speech indicated she led the way to the shed under the elder bushes.

There was no one there. Anny now reckoned that Ooncle would be in the mist-house.

A gate in the wall behind the elder bushes opened into the mist-house yard. Falshaw was alone there, pitching dung from the cow-shed. At the girl's call he came forward, leaning on his pitchfork. He was a big man, thick in the girth, and fair like his niece, and florid. Garvin reckoned his age at fifty or thereabouts. For in his body, built for power, the muscles had begun to slacken ; it was sunken in its secret foundations. Garvin supposed that this was because of Falshaw's age. What baffled him was the contradiction between Falshaw's face and its expression. It was natural that Falshaw should grow old ; but what had Falshaw done that his face, formed by nature in an hour of genial grossness, should have all its contours tortured to that look of irremediable gloom ?

The gloom did not lift as the big man slouched nearer, and (contemptuous of the stranger's greeting) inquired what Garvin wanted. His manner intimated that whatever it was Garvin would probably have to want it.

As to whether Garvin could put up at Falshaw's, Falshaw, like his niece, didn't know, he was sure. It depended upon whether the missus could " put oop " with Garvin.

Garvin, suddenly remembering what he had heard about Falshaw's wife, protested that his requirements would be slight. Falshaw did not know about that either, he was sure ; but he reckoned that Garvin

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would have to ask the missus. The missus was "oop there," in the house.

He was about to leave Garvin to deal with the situation when he seemed to think better of it, and to have decided that, after all, he would see him through. All this time he had clung to his pitchfork. He now planted it firmly in the earth to await his return. He seemed to leave it with reluctance and regret.

The girl Anny smiled as if she was pleased at the turn affairs were taking. Garvin thought he saw hope for himself in Anny's smile.

As they reached the door that had been shut against Garvin, Falshaw drew himself up and squared his shoulders with a tightening of all his muscles. He seemed to take the young man under his protection with an air of dogged courage in seeing him through. It struck Garvin then that Falshaw was afraid of his wife.

She sat in twilight and slant-wise from the doorway, so that she had her back both to them and to the light. The sound of the lifted latch had been answered by a loud and sudden scraping of her chair; it was like a shriek of fright. She rose as Garvin entered, and turned, as if she suffered the impulse of the pregnant woman to hide herself.

He approached her, uttering some such soft and inarticulate sound as he would have used to soothe a shy animal. As she swung heavily round and faced him he saw that he was likely to be mistaken as to Mrs. Falshaw's impulses. Otherwise he would have said that it was she who was afraid. But whatever her instinct was, fear or hostility, it already was submerged in the profound apathy of her gloom.

For the expression on Falshaw's face was a mere shadow fallen on it from his wife's face, where gloom and heaviness had entered into the substance of the flesh and the structure of the bone. Gloom was in the very fibre of her hair, a dull black, rusted.

It was Falshaw, with his air of protection, who put it to her whether it would be possible for them to take Garvin in.

"Ya knaw how *thot'll* end," said she significantly.

Things had happened, then, at Falshaw's. The gloom on Falshaw's face renewed Garvin's impression that Falshaw, perhaps, on account of these things, was afraid of his wife. He looked from her to his niece Anny, who stood leaning awkwardly against the dresser and twisting and untwisting a corner of her apron. There was a queer, half-frightened, half-sullen look on her face. And Garvin received a further impression, that the things that had happened at Falshaw's were connected unpleasantly with Falshaw's niece. It might well be. The girl was coarse.

By way of establishing his own incorruptibly moral character, Garvin drew a portrait of himself as a respectable, intellectual dry-as-dust, alien to human interests and emotions, intolerant of the society of his kind. So much so that he was obliged to stipulate that wherever he lodged there must be no other lodgers, and no children.

"There'll be no other lodgers. You can depend on thot," said Falshaw.

"And—no children?"

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The girl Anny stirred uneasily. Her face, florid a second ago, was white as Garvin looked at it. She hid her hands in her apron, turned on her heel abruptly, and left the room.

Then Garvin was sure that he knew. *That* was the trouble in the house. Falshaw's eyes followed his niece as she went out. There was some tenderness in the gross man, and plainly he was sorry for the girl. But his wife's face had tightened; it had grown even more forbidding than it had been. The woman, Garvin judged, had been hard on Anny. He could see Anny being ground under that nether millstone.

Of course they would resent his touching on the sore point, but it happened to be the point on which Garvin himself was uneasy, and he really had to settle it. He approached it gently and with some confusion.

"I was told——" he began, and hesitated.

"What were ya told?" said Falshaw.

"Why—that there weren't any."

"Speak oop. Ah doan' understond ya."

Garvin plunged. "I mean—any children. I say, you know, there aren't any, really, are there?" He plunged deeper. "I mean, of course, in the house." And deeper still. "I mean—at present."

"There's noa fear o' thot—here."

It was Falshaw's wife who spoke.

II

It was as if the heart of her gloom had suddenly found utterance. Silence followed it.

They had seated themselves round the deep open hearth-place, Garvin on the settle facing Mrs. Falshaw, and Falshaw in the middle facing his hearth. His attitude indicated that he was seeing Garvin through, not because he liked him or approved of him, but as a simple matter of justice between man and man.

He did not look at Garvin when he spoke to him. He had not looked straight at him since he had brought him into the house. He seemed unable to face another man fairly and squarely in the presence of his wife. That might be, Garvin supposed, either because he was afraid of her or because his consciousness of approaching fatherhood had made him shy. Now, as his wife spoke, he turned on Garvin a dumb and poignant look that besought his pity and his comprehension. It was as if he had said, "You see what's wrong with her"; as if he were letting him into the secret of her malady, of the gloom that hung about them both. And Garvin understood that the unfortunate woman had fallen into some melancholy incidental to her state. She had got it into her head that the unborn thing had died within her or would die. A curse was on her. She would never be the mother of a living child.

She sat there, leaning forward, propping her weight with hands planted on her thighs, and staring at the hearth, a creature bowed and stupefied

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with her burden. Her husband leaned forward too, staring as she stared, moved to a like attitude by sympathy. He pushed out his loose lips from time to time, as if he said, "That's how it takes her. That's how it takes her."

Garvin's delicacy prompted him to inquire whether it would be inconvenient for Mrs. Falshaw to take him in.

At this innocent query Falshaw actually smiled. It was the most extraordinary smile. Without altering the expression of his face it went quivering through his whole vast bulk, as if his body were invaded by a malign mirth. It became articulate.

"We woan't," said Falshaw, "put *ourselves* out for anybody."

Garvin took this as an intimation in the northern manner that he was to consider himself at home.

Falshaw now approached his wife so near as to reckon that they could let the yoong mon have the parlour and the back bedroom, and Mrs. Falshaw replied from the depths of her apathy that he, Falshaw, could do as he liked.

A brief inspection showed Garvin that his quarters, though small, were incomparably clean. He moved into them in the afternoon of the next day.

He was pleased with the cool stone-flagged parlour. Its narrow walls concentrated the light in a clear equable stream on his table under the window. He ranged his books on the top of the low cupboard that flanked the fireplace; and, if the room was still cold and strange to him, he had only to look at them to feel instantly at home. Nobody interfered with him.

It was his bedroom that made him realise that Falshaw had meant what he said. They weren't going to put themselves out for anybody, not they. Garvin's expert eye had measured the resources of the house, and he knew that he had got the worst bedroom in it. It was such a room as is only given to a servant even in houses like the Falshaws'. And nobody had turned out of it for him. With all its cleanness, it had the musty smell of long disuse. Garvin, however, preferred this smell to any kindred sign that might suggest recent habitation. Apart from its appearance and the smell, the room inspired him with a profound discomfort and distrust. He prowled about in it for half an hour, searching in vain for possible sources of this feeling.

So little did the Falshaws put themselves out that nobody came upstairs to tell the lodger that his tea was waiting for him in the parlour. He drank it lukewarm and stewed to an abominable blackness. A delicious scent of home-baked bread and hot girdle-cakes came from the Falshaws' kitchen, while Garvin sniffed suspicion at a sour loaf and a slab of salt butter from the village shop. Bacon from the shop appeared at his supper, its rankness intensified by a savour of hot stew wafted through the doorway. He ventured to ask Anny if he couldn't have some of the new bread he had smelt baking, and was told that they only baked once a week for themselves. The idea seemed to be that any food cooked

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by the Falshaws was sacred to the tribe. He wouldn't be allowed to eat it.

But Garvin was ready to endure any privation of mere appetite in the satisfaction of his passion for peace, and peace (he could feel it) was what he had found at Falshaw's.

Before going to bed he had assured himself that he had his side of the house entirely to himself. He found out that the girl Anny slept with Mrs. Falshaw in the large front room over the kitchen. He supposed that this arrangement was unavoidable if they wanted to keep the young minx out of harm's way. As for Falshaw, he was lodged in a commodious chamber next his wife's, covering both the parlour and the passage. Garvin's room was certainly not commodious. The roof of the house, low and short on the front of it, long and steep-pitched on the back, dwarfed Garvin's room to the proportions of a garret. The space on this side of the house was further taken up by a landing, lighted through a small pane in the slope of the roof.

The doors of the three rooms opened on to the landing. There was also, at the top of a short stair, a fourth door, opposite Garvin's. This door was locked (Garvin in his fastidious curiosity had tried it). But the wall, flanking the well of the staircase, reassured him. There could be no width behind it for anything bigger than a box room. Garvin was certain of his peace.

Oh, certain. At evening an almost unnatural stillness had fallen on the place. It was in the house, in the orchard, and in the yard down there under the ash-trees. It deepened with each hour of the night. He was almost oppressed with his sense of it as he lay in bed, waiting for the sleep which he knew would be shy of visiting him in his strange quarters.

He would have had a better chance—as far as sleeping went—if there *had* been some noise about; some noise, that was to say, outside his own body. For in the silence, Garvin's body, with all its pulses, had become a centre of intolerable clamour.

Garvin's body grew quiet. He was deliciously, delicately aware of the approach of sleep, of sleep entering his veins, of sleep and silence and oblivion flooding his brain, his heart, submerging him, or just submerging, when, with a terrible vain resistance and resentment, he found himself being drawn out of it.

What amazed him as he came up was the slenderness of the thread that drew him, a sound so fragile, so thin, that he was almost unaware of it as sound. His resentment flamed to indignation as the thing became audible and recognisable, distinctly recognisable, as the crying of a child.

It came from one of the upper rooms: it was hardly a crying, a sobbing, a whimpering rather, muffled by closed doors. The wonder was how it could have waked him; the sound was so distant, so smothered, so inarticulate.

It went on for a long time, and Garvin could not say whether it ceased or whether he slept through it. He knew he did sleep.

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III

In the morning he was aware that, as the victim of their deception, he was more interesting to the Falshaws than he had been overnight. Returning from a stroll before breakfast, he found Mrs. Falshaw standing in the door of the house and watching him. She slunk away at his approach and shut the kitchen door between them. Falshaw, encountered in the passage, eyed him stealthily with suspicion that turned at close quarters to defiance, as much as to say that, if Garvin was up to anything, he, Falshaw, was ready for him.

Garvin would have dealt with Falshaw then and there but for the presence of the girl Anny, who was stationed in the doorway of the parlour, watching also. She lingered in her waiting on him, and he discerned in her thick eyes a vague animal terror, half-spiritualised by an unspoken, an unspeakable appeal. It was borne in on him that her change of attitude was somehow connected with the disturbance of the night. He gathered from it that if her fear could have spoken it would have besought him to spare her, to say nothing.

His annoyance was accompanied by an inward shrug of cynical comprehension. Nothing more likely, said Garvin in his shrewdness, than that Anny should have borne a child, and that her child should be a shame and a burden to the Falshaws. They couldn't have resented it more than he did; but he meant to wait and see the extent of the nuisance before he made his protest.

All day the inviolate stillness of his solitude was a reproach to the resentment that he felt. The child was kept quiet, smuggled away somewhere out of sight.

But that night and the next night he heard it. And no wonder. He had found that its crying came from the small garret facing his, where apparently it was locked in and left to sleep alone.

It had its trick of waking at the same hour. The crying would begin about eleven and go on till past midnight. There was no petulance in it and no anger; it had all the qualities of a young child's cry, except the carnal dissonances and violences. The grief it uttered was too profound and too persistent, and, as it were, too pure; it knew none of the hot-blooded throes, the strangulated pauses, the lacerating resurgences of passion. At times it was shrill, unbroken, irremediable; at times it was no more than a sad sobbing and whimpering, stifled, Garvin gathered, under the bedclothes. He lay and listened to it till he knew all its changes and inflections, its languors and wearinesses, its piteous crescendos and amazements, as of a creature malignly re-created, born again to its mysterious, immitigable suffering.

As he never slept until it had ceased, Garvin was qualified to witness to the Falshaws' abominable neglect. Nobody came near the poor little wretch to comfort it. It was probably frightened there all by itself. The mere sound of the crying wouldn't have kept him awake but for his pity for the helpless thing that made it. In the daytime he found himself thinking about it. He couldn't get away from the thought of it.

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He worried over it. He had the horrible idea that the child suffered on his account; that the Falshaws kept it locked up in the garret in the daytime that it might be out of the lodger's way. As this theory was inconsistent with their allowing it to keep the lodger awake at night, he could only suppose that the Falshaws were as indifferent to its suffering as to his. They had more than one devil in their blood. Likely enough, it was the devil of Puritanism that made the man and woman cruel to the child of Anny's sin.

But the girl herself?

He had the very worst opinion of the girl Anny. He was convinced that Anny, and not Mrs. Falshaw, was the mother of the child. Not that he was inclined to think hardly of the girl for having it. What he couldn't stand was her behaviour to it now that she had had it. There was nothing very intimately revealing in Anny's heavy, full-blown face; but Garvin had judged her gross. He saw her now sinning grossly, for the sin's sake, without any grace of tenderness. She was the kind predestined to go wrong. She lacked the intelligence that might have kept her straight. He could see her going to meet her sin half-way, slowly, without any beating of the heart, finding the way by some dull instinct older than her soul.

He was obliged to admit that the poor thing had at any rate let *him* alone. Probably her instinct sufficed to tell her that he was not her prey. But he had gathered that she was responsible for the Falshaws' unwillingness to take him in; and it was plain enough that they kept a sharp lookout on her. He knew their habits now. He knew, for instance, that Falshaw accompanied his niece on any errand undertaken after dark. Indoors they wouldn't trust her out of their sight a minute on his side of the house. Now he came to think of it, he had never once seen her there in the hours of dusk and dark; he had never found her alone in his room at any hour. Mrs. Falshaw was always hovering somewhere near; her forbidding eye was for ever on the poor girl as she swept and scoured.

This austerity of the Falshaws had its inconveniences for Garvin. He didn't expect a tidy room at bed-time, or hot water, or sheets invitingly turned down. But nobody seemed to think of closing the window when the evening mists came on and settled on his bed, or when the rain beat in and made it damp.

He determined to deal with Anny.

He dealt with her on the morning after his third bad night.

"Look here," he said; "why don't you keep that child quiet?"

Her gross colour fled. And yet she faced him.

"You've heard her, sir?"

"Of course I've heard her."

Her thick eyes stared at him. They were curiously without shame.

"You don't look as if you had," she said.

That and her stare staggered him. Before he could answer her she had given utterance to a still more amazing thing.

"You needn't go," she said. "She won't hurt you."

With that she left him.

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IV

That night, his fourth, Garvin found that his nerves were growing so increasingly, so frightfully sensitive to sound that the crying seemed to come from the threshold of his door, from his bedside, from his pillow. It got from his nerves into his dreams, and he woke with the sense of a child's body pressed to his body, the palms of its hands upon his breast, its face hidden against his side, and the vibration of its sobbing above his heart. The thing passed, with a fainter, shivering, vanishing vibration which he felt as somehow external to himself.

He sat up, wideawake, and listened. The crying had ceased. His nerves were all right again.

He supposed he'd have (as Falshaw would have said) to put up with it. He could, after all, reckon on six or seven hours' good sleep, and in the daytime the poor little thing was quiet enough in all conscience. He couldn't very well resent it.

And yet he did resent it. He resented the cruelty of it. So much so that he spoke about it to Mackinnon, the doctor, whose acquaintance he had made when he was lodging up in the village. Mackinnon had called at the house in the Bottom to see how Mrs. Falshaw was getting on. Garvin lay in wait for him and asked him if he couldn't do something. He, Garvin, couldn't stand it.

The doctor was a little Highlander, red haired, fiery, and shrewd. He looked shrewdly at Garvin and told him that if he couldn't stand *that* his nerves must be in an awful state. And he took him off with him in his motor on a long round that swept the district.

That evening, Garvin, drowsed with the wind of speed, refused the solicitations of the County History and went to bed before ten.

He was in the act of undressing when he heard the child cry.

The sobbing whimper was no longer stifled under bed-clothes; it sounded distinctly from the open landing. Garvin unlatched his door and looked out.

At this hour of the newly risen moon there was light on the landing like a grey day. He saw a girl child standing on the garret stair. It had on a short nightgown that showed its naked feet. It was clinging to the rail with one hand.

Its face was so small, so shrunken and so bleached, that at first its actual features were indistinct to him. What *was* distinct, appallingly distinct, was the look it had; a look not to be imagined or defined, and thinkable only as a cry, an agony, made visible.

The child stood there long enough to fix on him its look. At the same time it seemed so withdrawn in the secret of its suffering as to be unaware of him.

It descended the stair, went close past him, and crossed the landing to the women's room.

Now on these hot August nights the door was left half-open, leaving a wide passage way into the room. Garvin could see it. He looked for

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the child to go in where its mother lay. Instead of going in it stood there motionless as if it kept watch.

Then all at once it began crying, crying and beating on the open door with its tenuous hands, beating and pushing as against a door closed and locked.

It was then that Garvin knew.

The creature gave up its efforts at last and turned from the door sobbing. Garvin could not see its face now, for it had raised its arms and held them across its forehead with the backs of the hands pressed against its weeping eyes. Thus blinded, it made its way across the landing towards Garvin's door, and passed by him, still unaware, into his room.

He went in and shut-to the door. The child was standing by the foot of the bed as if it watched somebody who slept there. It stayed, watching, while Garvin undressed and got into bed. Then—Garvin was not frightened nor even surprised at what happened then; he seemed to have expected it—the little creature climbed up the bedside and crept in beside him. He felt, flesh to flesh, its body pressed to his body, the palms of its hands upon his breast, and its face hidden against his side.

V

He knew now what he was in for; he knew what was the matter with house; he knew its secret, the source of what, so far as *he* went, he could only call its fascination. For he could swear to his own state of mind—he was *not* afraid.

On one point only he was uncertain. He did not yet know whether he were alone or not in his experience, whether the Falshaws knew what he knew, and whether it was the things that they knew, that they had heard and seen, their experiences, which accounted for their abiding gloom. Neither they nor anybody else had told him precisely what he would be in for if he insisted on staying at Falshaw's; but there had been (he remembered now) a rather sinister inflection laid on certain words that had been said to him.

They came back to him now. He could have very little doubt that the place had a sinister reputation, and that the Falshaws knew it. He had not understood it at the time, because his mind had been so misled by Falshaw's bodily grossness that it could only form a gross conception of the trouble of the house, of the things that, as they had intimated to him, had happened there. Poor Garvin profoundly repented the infamy of some of his suspicions, those relating to the girl Anny.

He found on the morning of his experience that Falshaw's attitude, like his own, had changed somewhat overnight. The gross man was still suspicious (like Garvin), but there was more solicitude than hostility in his suspicion. He watched Garvin as if he thought he were going to be ill, as if he knew and were on the look out for the symptoms of his malady.

Ill or not (he certainly felt all right), Garvin was an object of even greater interest to his friend Mackinnon. The doctor called that evening with the evident intention of cheering him up. Garvin felt that Mackinnon was on the look out for something too. They talked about the

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County History and Garvin's part in it, which Mackinnon plainly regarded as conferring lustre upon Garvin. Incidentally he put him in the way of much valuable information, for the doctor knew something (sometimes he knew a great deal) about each house and its family within thirty miles round.

In the pauses of the conversation they could hear Falshaw talking to his wife. The two were sitting up late, and he seemed to be arguing with her.

It was eleven o'clock before Mackinnon went. The clank of the gate behind him was instantly followed by the sound of Mrs. Falshaw's chair scraping on the stone flags of the kitchen and by Falshaw's fist knocking upon Garvin's door.

He was almost respectful as he stood looming before Garvin's writing-table.

"Mr. Garvin," he began, "ah've soommat to saay to you. If you doan't loike what you've found you'd better goa. There's noa call for you to give th' 'ouse a bod naame. There's too mooch been saaid. Ah'm dommed if ah'll put oop with it."

"I know the worst," said Garvin quietly, "and *I* can put up with it. How do you know what your next lodger 'll do—or say?"

Falshaw's huge bulk seemed to sway there as he placed his balled fists on the table for support. He was silent.

"Mr. Falshaw, I don't know how much you know, or what—but if it happens to be what I know——"

"Ah doan't saay as 'tisn't. What ah saay is that there's noa call for you to stomach it. You can goa."

"I don't want to go. Why should I?"

"You doan't?" He peered at him.

"Of course not."

"Then, sir" (it was the first time that Falshaw had called him "sir"), "you bean't afeard?"

"No more, Mr. Falshaw, then you are yourself."

"Ah've noa cause to be afeard. Ah knaw nothing."

A tremor passed through him as from some centre stirred by utterance. His face quivered. Its brute heaviness was redeemed for a moment by some inscrutable pathos. It was impossible to say whether Falshaw deplored his ignorance or repudiated knowledge.

On the whole, Garvin inclined to think that he *was* alone in his experience.

VI

Three days passed. Night after night Garvin witnessed the same supernatural event.

His senses were now so perfectly adjusted to his experience that he no longer thought of it as supernatural. What struck him as marvellous was the change it worked in the Falshaws now that they knew he had it. He was evidently set apart, consecrated by his experience. He had become for them an object of extraordinary respect—he would almost have said

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of affection. Whereas they had once disregarded his wishes and treated his little likings and dislikings with an almost insolent contempt, now, everything that he had ever asked for, that he had ever wanted without asking for, was remembered and provided. The fresh home-made bread that he had coveted appeared daily at his table; his meals had a savour and variety which he would have judged beyond the scope of Mrs. Falshaw's art. He could hardly suppose that they did it for the sake of gain; for, poor as they were, they had taken him in under protest and had made no effort to keep him until now.

This change from hostility to the extreme of friendliness dated from the evening when he had declared to Falshaw that he felt no fear.

The statement (he had to own it) required qualification. It was true enough that he felt no fear of the primal, the complete manifestation. That, having all the colours and appearances of flesh and blood, had the value, the assurance, almost the inevitability of a natural thing. It had parted with its horror from the moment when he perceived that it was responsive to his pity and accessible to his succour.

But Garvin, reviewing his experiences, distinguished between the perfect and the imperfect. Beyond the primal haunting, round and about the central figure, the completed vision, he was conscious of a borderland of fear into which he had not yet entered.

It was chiefly present to him as a disagreeable feeling he had about his bedroom—a feeling which little Garvin, as he valued his own manliness, sternly refused to attend to. Still it was there. But for that sense he had, he would have preferred his garret to the long eastern chambers looking on the orchard of dead trees. The branches that hung before his window were alive. At sunset the light ran through their leaves, kindling them to a divine translucent green. And yet he loathed it.

The room had, clearly, some profound significance for the child, since it was always compelled to come there. But the significance was something that Garvin didn't care to explore; he felt it to be part of the peculiar, foggy unpleasantness of the borderland.

It was strange that, while he knew no terror of the perfect apparition, the bedfellow, his fear of the borderland was growing on him. His feeling was that if the things that were *there* became visible they would be more than he could endure.

There were degrees in the clearness of the primal manifestation; degrees which, as he made it out, corresponded to the intensity of the emotion, the suffering behind it. The child's form gathered and lost substance. At times it was of an extreme tenuity, suggesting nothing tangible. At times it had, not only the colour, but the pressure of flesh and blood. At times its face, its hands, and little naked feet had the peculiar vivid whiteness of white skin seen under water. Its feet along the floor were like feet moving through water.

He saw it now by day as well as night. It would pass him in the passage, on the stairs. It lay in wait for him at his door or at its own. He had an idea that it spent hours playing in the backyard under the ash-trees. Once when he looked out of his window he could have sworn

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that he saw it hanging over the great stone water-tank that stood there at the corner of the wall. He had never once seen it in his sitting-room, and what went on in the Falshaws' kitchen he could not say.

Thrice he saw it in the garden, coming towards him from the back-yard and going to a corner under the orchard wall. As it passed under the trees he could see the grass growing through its feet. It carried in its hand a little cup of water which it emptied there in the corner. It was busy and absorbed, very earnestly and seriously bent upon this act. He noticed that always, out of doors, the appearance was imperfect, but he discerned dimly that, out of doors, it had a happy look.

He examined the corner that it visited. A long flat-faced stone stood upright in the wall there; below it, hidden by the grass, he found a small plot marked out with stones.

A child's garden ruined beyond remembrance. There were gaps in its borders where the stones had been upheaved or buried. In the middle, trampled and beaten into the earth, he came upon the fragments of a broken cup.

It was thus that he began to construct the child's history. He had found that its more complete manifestations occurred indoors, on the landing and after dark, and that they culminated in bodily contact, the pressure of its form—the bedfellow's—against his own. And so he argued that outside, in the open air, it had been happy. It was within the house that the suffering which was its life had come to pass; the suffering was somehow connected with the closing of Mrs. Falshaw's door; it was habitually intenser at night-time, and it had its unspeakable climax, its agony, in Garvin's room.

On all these points he was certain with an absolute and immutable certainty. What baffled him was their date. Things had happened. He had more than a sense, an intolerable sense, of their happening. But *when* had they happened? To which one of the four generations that the house had known?

He thought he could tell if he could only get into the room where, as far as he could make it out, the whole thing started, the garret opposite his own with the stair before its door. It was the child's room and was bound to contain some sign or trace of the child. He must contrive to get in somehow.

He found a pretext. The parlour was still lumbered with the packing-cases his books had travelled in (Garvin had bruised his shins over them more than once). He approached Falshaw and asked him if he might not store the packing-cases in that box-room that they had upstairs. He supposed it was a box-room.

Falshaw hesitated. His gloom deepened. Presently, with some visible perturbation, he replied. Mr. Garvin might do as he liked. He would give him the key of the room. Mr. Garvin would be so good as to put the packing-cases in the space behind the door, without—Falshaw's trouble grew on him—disarranging anything.

He carried the cases upstairs and left them on the landing after giving

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Garvin the key of the room. It was evident that nothing would induce him to go in there himself.

Garvin's heart beat thickly as he entered. The room—he could see at a glance—was not used as a box-room. It was not used now for anything at all. It was a long garret, narrowed excessively by the sloping roof, and bare of all furniture but a chest of drawers and a washstand near the window, and, drawn to the far end of the room against the wall, two objects, each covered with a white sheet.

Garvin drew back the sheets. Thrust away, hidden out of sight, shrouded like the dead, were a child's little chair and a child's cot. He could see the slender hollow in the mattress where its body had lain.

He raised the edge of the coarse blue and white counterpane. The pillow beneath was not soiled, neither was it freshly clean. There was a small round patch, slightly discoloured, slightly dinted, by the pressure of a child's head.

For a moment that brought the thing horribly near to him.

He felt the hollows with his hand and found that they were hard. His reason told him that it must have taken more than one generation to make them so. He was, therefore, no surer of his date. The room had given him an uncomfortable sensation, and that was all.

That evening, setting out for his walk, he met Falshaw in the path coming over the brow of the hill. They exchanged a greeting and some remarks about the weather. There was a wind on the hill, and Falshaw advised Garvin not to go far. It was beating up, he said, for rain.

Garvin turned and walked back with him towards the lane. A sudden impulse seized him to make Falshaw talk. They stopped at the rise where the naked plum-tree pointed to the house in the Bottom.

"That's not an old house for these parts, Falshaw. How long have you had it?"

"Ever since ah can remember. Ma faather had it before me, and 'is faather before 'im agen."

"Four generations, then?"

"Three, sir." He added, "There'll be four soon enough if all goas well."

It was his first open reference to his wife's state.

"Why shouldn't all go well?"

"Thot's what I tell the missus. But ah can't move 'er. She's got it into 'er 'ead thot thick," said Falshaw gloomily.

Garvin murmured something vaguely consoling; and all the time his mind was running on his date. He must make Falshaw give it him.

"You see, Mr. Garvin, she's bin, you may say, in a dark state ever since——"

He stopped. Speech was painful and difficult to him.

"Ever since?" For a moment Garvin felt that Falshaw might be giving him the date.

But if Falshaw had hovered on the verge of a confidence he now drew back. All he said was, "It's more soometimes than ah can put oop with."

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He meditated.

"And t' doctor, e cooms to cheer 'er oop, but 'e can't *do* nowt."

"What does he think?" asked Garvin, recalled to sympathy by the man's misery.

"Think? 'E doan't think. 'E saays it's natch'ral to 'er condition. But—ah doan't remember——"

He stopped again, and fell into the gloom that Garvin recognised as the shadow of his wife's dark state.

"It's a bod job, Mr. Garvin, it's a bod job."

"I wonder," said Garvin, "if I ought to stay much longer. She may be doing too much. Honestly, hadn't I better go?"

Falshaw shook his head.

"Doan't you think thot, sir; doan't you think thot."

"I can't bear," Garvin went on, "to be giving trouble at a time like this."

"Trooble? You call *thot* trooble?"

"Well——"

"You'll bring trooble, Mr. Garvin, if you goa."

"I don't understand."

"And ah doan't understond it neither. But—if you *can* stop, Mr. Garvin, doan't you goa. Doan't you goa."

He paused.

"If she sees you con stond it, maybe she'll mak out thot things can't be so bod."

Things? It was vague; but when it came to the point, to Garvin's point, Falshaw *was* vague. Garvin felt that they were on the verge again. He was determined to find out how much Falshaw knew, or how much he didn't know. He would tackle him there and then. He would tackle him suddenly and straight.

"Things can't be so bad if I can stand them?" he questioned. "And how bad do you think they are yourself, Falshaw?"

"Ah doan't think. And ah *knaw* nobbut what ah've heard. What you've heard." (He glossed it further.) "What folks saay."

"And these things—that they say, how long have they been said?"

Falshaw winced. "Ah doan't knaw."

There was no doubt that Falshaw repudiated any personal knowledge of the things; but then, Garvin reflected, he might be lying. He pressed it home.

"Before your time?"

"Noa. Not afore *ma* time. Thot couldn't be."

He said it simply and uncontrollably, as if it had been wrung from him, not by Garvin but by the pressure of some suffering of his own. He was profoundly unaware of having given Garvin what he wanted.

"You know *that*," said Garvin, who was for the moment insensible to pity in the excitement of following his trail.

Falshaw rallied. "Ah knaw nothing, ah tell you, but what ah've heard. Nothing but what *you've* heard, Mr. Garvin."

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They had come to the stone stile that led into the lane. They stood there facing each other.

"It's not what I've heard," said Garvin. "It's what I've seen."

At that Falshaw turned from him and bowed himself upon the stone wall.

VII

Up till that moment Garvin had barely hinted at the nature of his experiences. He was aware that his previous intimations had given Falshaw some uncomfortable emotions; but he was not prepared for the violence of the passion with which his final revelation was received.

He couldn't leave the man there in his agony; neither could he touch him nor speak to him. A certain awe restrained him in the presence of a feeling so tremendous and inscrutable.

It was Falshaw who recovered first, pulling his huge bulk together and steadying himself to speak. It was as if under it all he had not forgotten the consideration due to Garvin, who had become so inexplicably the witness and partaker of his tragedy.

"Mr. Garvin," he said, "ah think ah knaw what you may have seen. And ah tell you you've noa call to be afeard. It woan't harm you."

It was what Anny had told him.

"I know," he said, "it won't harm me."

"It wouldn't," Falshaw went on. "There's a soort o' pity in they things."

He paused, feeling for his words.

"They knaw; and they doan't coom to those that are afeard of 'em. They doan't coom so as to be seen."

He paused again, meditating, and fell back upon his phrase, "It's the pity in them."

He climbed the stone stile and went slowly towards his house.

Garvin turned and walked again to the brow of the hill. There he stopped and looked back. Above the stone wall of the orchard, in the corner of the child's garden, he saw Falshaw standing, with his head bowed to his breast.

He said to himself then that he might have known. The child's garden under the orchard grass—*that* belonged clearly to the Falshaws' time. Why—as grass grows—within fifteen, within ten years it would have been buried, grassed over, without a stone to show that it had ever been. It belonged, not to Falshaw's father's generation, nor yet to Falshaw's, but to the generation that his wife bore in her womb.

VIII

The wild plum-tree on the hill rocked in the south-west wind, and pointed, gesticulated at the house.

Garvin's gaze followed the network of stone walls flung over the country. He had a sense of the foregoneness of the things he saw. He

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saw the network as a system of lines that, wherever you picked it up and followed it, led in some predestined way to the house as its secret and its centre. You couldn't get away from the house.

It was in an effort to get away from it that he walked on towards the fells.

The wind, as Falshaw had warned him, was beating up for rain. The south-west was black with rain. He could see it scudding up over the shoulder of the fell.

Half-way he turned and was blown home before the storm, leaning backwards, supporting himself on the wind. A mile from the Bottom the rain caught him and soaked him through.

Falshaw and Anny stood at the door of the house, watching for him. They were troubled at his drenching. He changed, and threw his dripping clothes down over the stairhead to be dried in the kitchen. He knew that neither Falshaw nor Anny had the nerve to go to his room to fetch them. He was glad to get out of it himself.

Mrs. Falshaw had his supper keeping hot for him by the kitchen hearth. She proposed that he should sit and eat it there while the fire was being lit in the parlour. He had owned to a chilliness.

She had set the lamp on the supper table, and sat in the ring of twilight with darkness behind her. Portions of her face and body thus appeared superficially illuminated, while the bulk of her became part of the darkness. Garvin was deeply aware of her face and of her eyes, which were fixed on him with an intolerable hunger. The face was sombre and sallow; it was hewn with a hard, unrounded heaviness, unlike her husband's. It would have been deadly hard but for the fugitive, hunted look that gave it a sort of painful life in deadness. Whether she sat or stood she was a creature overtaken, fixed in her fear, with no possibility of escape.

There were moments when he thought that she was about to speak, to ask him what he had seen. He felt somehow that she knew. She knew he had seen something. Whatever Mackinnon thought, he, Garvin, knew, and her husband knew, that she suffered no bodily ailment. What weighed on her was her sense of the supernatural, and her fear of it and of its inscrutable work on her, penetrating her flesh and striking the child that was to be born. It had been already brought home to him that his value, his fascination for her lay in his shared sense of it. That was the secret that they kept between them.

It was terrible to have to sit in that tongue-tied communion, and eat, bearing his own knowledge and her sense of it. He was glad when it was over and he was safe in the parlour, a place which he felt to be immune from these influences.

Anny was in there, on her knees by the hearth, trying to coax the fire to draw up the damp chimney. His impulse urged him to talk to Anny as he had talked to Falshaw. He was at that stage when he had to talk to somebody; and he wanted to know how much Anny knew.

"Anny," he said, "my bed's damp; why didn't you go up and shut the window?" He knew why.

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She rose and stood before him, awkwardly wiping her hands on her rough apron.

"Because I'm afeard, sir."

He looked at Anny. She was coarsely made as to the body, but to his purified perception there seemed to flow from her an almost radiant innocence and probity.

"What are you afraid of?"

She glanced aside miserably.

"You knaw what."

"Yes, I know. But you told me yourself it wouldn't hurt me."

"Hurt you? Little Affy——"

It had a name then, but he hadn't caught it.

"Little——"

"Little Affy."

"Effy," he murmured.

"Yes, sir. Little Affy never 'urt anyone in her life."

He said it over to himself. It touched him even more than Falshaw's "There's a sort of pity in they things." It brought the child nearer to him, poignantly near, in tender flesh and blood. He felt the sting of an intolerable evocation.

It was not yet complete.

"Who *was* little Effy?"

The girl's eyelids flickered and reddened and filled with tears.

"I mustn't talk about her, sir."

"Why not?"

"I promised Ooncle."

"It doesn't matter, does it, as long as I'm not afraid?"

"You're *not* afraid, sir" (she whispered it), "to sleep with her?"

"No, Anny, I'm not afraid."

The girl said "Good night" as if she had said "God bless you," and left him to his thought.

Whatever Anny had or hadn't seen, she *knew*.

He could not doubt that he was alone in his complete experience, yet he would have said that if ever there was a man and a woman and a girl that were haunted, it was Falshaw and his wife and the girl Anny. He could only suppose that their haunting was vague and imperfect. They lived on the edge of the borderland of fear, discovering nothing clearly yet knowing all. Anny, at any rate, knew the worst.

For he always put it to himself that it *was* the worst, even while he felt in his flesh the horror of the borderland, his own borderland, beyond.

It was on him that night, though he tried to fortify himself by reiterating that he knew the worst, and that if his nerves could stand that they could stand anything. He was not afraid (as Anny had suggested) to sleep as he had slept; he was not afraid of his bedfellow. He was afraid of his room, and of his bed, of the white sheets and the coarse quilt, of the whole twilight bulk of it, waiting for him in the corner by the window wall.

His sense of terror had defined itself as a sense of evil surpassing the

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fear of the supernatural. It was borne in on him that some iniquitous thing had had its place in this house and in this room.

He lay awake there, listening to the sounds of the night; to the wind sweeping the ash boughs along the roof above his window; to the drip of the rain in the stone trough beneath. The sounds of the night comforted him; and, before long, his brain became fogged with a grey stupor. But the stupor was like a veil spread over some backward, bottomless pit of fear. Tenuous itself, intangible, it yet held him, perilously it held him, breaking, delaying, lengthening out, moment by moment, his imminent descent.

The air in the close garret oppressed him to suffocation. He got up and opened the window. The wind and the rain had passed, the ash-trees were still; a clear light, grey as water, filled the room. Things showed in it solid and distinct. Something seemed to shift in Garvin's brain with the sudden shifting of his body, and, as he stood there at the foot of the bed, he was aware of something happening before him.

He couldn't say what it was that happened. He only knew that it was bound to happen; it had been foreshadowed by his fear. He knew what that sudden shifting in his brain meant. He had simply gone over the borderland of fear and was in the gripping centre.

There were two there, a man and a woman. He did not discern them as ordinary supernatural presences; the terror they evoked surpassed all fear of the intangible. Of one thing he was certain—the man was Falshaw. He could swear to that. The woman he had with him was a woman whom Garvin had never seen. He couldn't say what it was he saw, what was done by those two, but he knew that it was evil. He couldn't say whether he really saw it, or whether he apprehended it by some supreme sense more living and more horrible than sight. It was monstrous, unintelligible; it lay outside the order of his experience. He seemed, in this shifting of his brain, to have parted with his experience, to have become a creature of vague memory and appalling possibilities of fear. He had told the truth when he had said that he was not afraid. Until this moment he had never known what fear was. The feeling was unspeakable. Its force, its vividness was such as could be possible only to a mind that came virgin to horror.

The whole thing lasted for a second or so. When it passed and the two with it, Garvin turned and saw the child, in its nightgown and with its naked feet, standing in the middle of the room and staring at the bed as he had stared. The fear on its face was more terrible to Garvin than his own fear. If it *was* his own.

He turned sick and knew nothing. He supposed he must have fainted.

IX

The next day Garvin said to himself that he would see Mackinnon. His nerves had gone to pieces for the time being, and he would have to get Mackinnon to patch them up. He found himself clinging to the thought of Mackinnon.

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He spent the morning and afternoon out of doors, as far from Falshaw's as his legs would carry him; and in the evening he went to see Mackinnon.

The doctor was out, and Garvin waited. He hadn't the pluck to go back to Falshaw's without seeing Mackinnon.

By the time Mackinnon appeared (late for dinner) Garvin knew that he hadn't really come there to consult him. He had come to talk to him, to make him tell him what he knew about the Falshaws. He couldn't think why on earth he hadn't done it before, but he supposed Mackinnon must have put him off by the stupid things he had said about his nerves. He didn't mean to be put off to-night, and he wasn't going to talk about his nerves.

Neither was Mackinnon. He only looked at Garvin and said it was odd his being there; for he had just gone round to Falshaw's to see Garvin and bring him back to dine.

They dined alone together (Mackinnon was a bachelor); but it was afterwards in his den, over the cigarettes and whisky, that they talked.

"I say," said Garvin, who began it, "do you know anything about those Falshaws?"

"Oh, as much as I know about most people," said Mackinnon.

"Do you know what's the matter with them?"

"Would you expect me to own it if I didn't?"

"You know as well as I do that there's something wrong with them."

"There's something wrong with Mrs. Falshaw. Melancholy. They get it. She's had it ever since."

"Ever since what? That's what I want to know."

Mackinnon shrugged. "Ever since she began to be—— "

"You think *that* accounts for it?"

"Presumably."

"Well—but how about Falshaw? And how about the girl Anny? And if it comes to that—how about *me?*"

"You? I suppose you've been hearing some queer stories. There *are* queer stories."

"I haven't heard one of them," said Garvin.

"Are you quite sure?"

"Positive."

"What *have* you heard, then?"

"I told you the other day."

"Yes," said Mackinnon; "that's one of the stories."

"How do you account for them?"

"The stories?"

"Yes."

"The facts account for the stories right enough."

"You mean they've been fabricated after the fact?"

"That's what happens."

"You forget," said Garvin, "that I haven't heard the stories and that I don't yet know the facts."

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"I can give you them if you want them. They're quite as queer as the stories, and more interesting, because more human."

"I think," said Garvin, "you'd better hear *my* story first."

"Haven't I heard it?"

"Not my latest. Do you want it?"

"Well, I'd like to see if it's different from other people's. You know they all say they've *heard* things."

"Do they say they've seen them?"

"No. None of them seem to have gone as far as that."

"Well, I've gone as far as that—farther."

He told Mackinnon as casually as he could what he had seen.

Mackinnon was inclined to be impatient. "Yes, yes—a child that cries—in a nightgown—of course. But can you describe her? Can you give me any details?"

"She was very small; she had short hair—bleached—and pale eyes. The flesh under her eyes was sunken. Two little pits—just here. Her face was sallow white and drawn a little, by her nostrils——"

"Queer," murmured Mackinnon, "very queer."

Garvin went on till Mackinnon interrupted him again.

"Beating on the door? Which door?"

"The door of Mrs. Falshaw's room."

"All right. Go on."

Garvin went on, to the scene in the orchard. "And I've seen it hanging over that stone tank at the back."

"Good God!" said Mackinnon softly.

Garvin came to his last experience.

"There," he said, "I own I am a bit vague."

"You're certain you saw a man and a woman?"

"Yes. And I'm certain that the man was Falshaw. But the woman I know nothing about. It wasn't Mrs. Falshaw."

"No," said Mackinnon thoughtfully. "Can you describe her?"

"I couldn't see her very well. Falshaw was between us. She was big and young and—that part of it's beastly."

He stopped.

"And the beastliest thing about it is that I didn't understand it, Mackinnon, I didn't understand it—and, frankly, I was in an awful funk."

Mackinnon stared. "You didn't understand it?"

"I'm only talking about what I felt at the time. I'm explaining what made it so horrible. I seemed to have parted with my power of understanding—a whole tract of knowledge—clean gone——"

Mackinnon was silent.

"What room were you in?" he asked presently.

"The small room at the back."

"I know." The doctor shifted his position as if he were trying to shake off something.

"Well," he said, "that yarn of yours would be queer enough if you

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knew the facts. As it is, I don't mind telling you that it's the queerest yarn I've heard yet."

"Can you account for it?"

"My dear Garvin, you can't live up here, in this country and with these people, and still go about accounting for things. If you're a wise man you accept them."

"You accept my statements then?"

"I have to. They square with the facts. Did you say anything to the Falshaws?"

"A little—to him—and Anny. I can't tell how much they know. They wouldn't say."

"Anny wouldn't?"

"She let out that the child's name was Effy; and then she told me she'd promised Falshaw not to talk about her."

"She isn't allowed to talk about her—because she—*knows*. She didn't tell you that Effy was the Falshaws' child?"

"No."

"She was. Their only child. She died three years ago."

"How?"

"Drowned. In the stone tank under your window."

"She fell in," said Garvin dreamily.

"She fell in. There was nobody about. She must have had some sort of fit, or she could have got out all right."

"Who found her?"

"The woman you saw."

Garvin winced.

"The Falshaws were severely censured at the inquest. You see, the child oughtn't to have been left alone. She'd had one fit about a month before and they knew it."

"And before that?"

"Can't say. Nobody knew. They weren't likely to know. The child was left by herself night and day."

"I see. That's what's the matter with them."

"No doubt it's what's given Sarah Falshaw this idea of hers that the baby will be born dead. Shouldn't wonder if it was. Good thing, too, when you think how she made the other one suffer."

Mackinnon's fire broke out. "Women like that oughtn't to bear children. But they do. They always will do."

"She wants it to live?"

"I can't tell you what she wants—now."

"She didn't want—the other one?"

"Oh, she wanted her well enough. But she wanted something else more. And she had to want. She'd been all right to the child until she found that out; and then she couldn't bear the sight of it."

"She wanted another man, I suppose?"

"Not a bit of it. She wanted her own husband. It isn't a pretty story to tell, Garvin."

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X

All the same he told it.

"I'd say she was like an animal, only animals don't carry the thing to the point of insanity. And animals—most of them, at any rate—aren't cruel to their young."

"What did she do to it?"

"She did nothing. That was it. She used to say it was Falshaw's fault that she didn't care for it. Everything, you see, was Falshaw's fault. But she behaved as if it was the child's fault that Falshaw didn't want her. You'd have said she had a grudge against it. Things certainly got worse after it came. But she'd led him a life before that. Lord, what a life a woman *can* lead a man when she wants him more than he wants her and he lets her know it.

"They'd been all right at first. You wouldn't think it, but Sarah was a fine-looking woman when he married her—one of those hard black and white women who turn yellow when they worry. And Sarah was the sort that worried. She worried the life out of Falshaw. He was a big, strong, full-blooded fellow with a lot of exuberant young animality about him, and look at him now; what aged man do you suppose he is? Fifty, wouldn't you? Well, if you'll believe it, he's only thirty-eight. That's Sarah.

"He was twenty-three when he married her, and Sarah may have been a bit older. And they'd been married five years before the child came. He wasn't a bad sort, Falshaw, and he rubbed along with Sarah and her tongue and her temper for three years or so. He used to say she didn't mean it, and she couldn't help it, and she'd be all right when there was a youngster or two about. I suppose he thought all women were like that when they hadn't any children. The worst of it was she knew he thought it, and it riled her.

"Many a man would have tried to knock it out of her with a stout ash stick, but Falshaw wasn't that sort. He chuckled and grinned at her and reckoned secretly on the baby. And there's something exquisitely irritating, to a woman of Sarah's temperament, in a man who chuckles and grins and reckons on a baby that doesn't come. And long before it came she'd tired him out, and he took up with another woman, a bad lot.

"That was a temporary lapse. Falshaw's heart wasn't in it. And, though I don't suppose Sarah forgave him, she got over it. But she never got over Rhoda Webster.

"Rhoda was a servant girl at the White Hart Inn. I don't blame Falshaw, mind you. When I think what his life was, I'm glad he had that one bright spot of immorality to look back upon. He'd got into the way of going off to the White Hart—a good two miles—to get out of the range of his wife's tongue, and Rhoda wasn't by any means a bad girl—then. She was neither good nor bad; she was just natural, without a bit of art to help her one way or the other. Anyhow, there was so little harm in the girl—then—or in Falshaw for that matter, that nothing happened till he had her in his house after Sarah's child was born. Sarah was laid up for months—that's how it took her—and the man was at his

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wits' end. Rhoda got restless and left her place, and was always in and out of Falshaw's house looking after Falshaw. She'd walk the two miles from the village and back just to cook his dinner and see him eat it. And when Sarah got about again she wasn't fit for much, and she had to mind the baby. So Falshaw kept on having the girl about the house. He said he had to have someone.

"That went on for months and months. It looked innocent enough; but Sarah began to suspect things. They had a row about it. Sarah said the girl was to go, and Falshaw said she was to stay, and if Sarah didn't like it she could lump it.

"It ended in the girl staying altogether. She slept in the house. Then Sarah found them out. And this time it broke her nerve. If she'd been a woman of any spirit she'd have left him. But she wasn't that sort. The feeling she had for Falshaw wouldn't let her leave him. She had to stay. She wasn't going to leave him to the other woman, and the other woman wasn't going to leave him to her. So there they were all three, shut up in that house, Falshaw carrying on with Rhoda behind his wife's back, and his wife stalking them, and seeing everything and pretending half the time she didn't see. And Rhoda, if you please, amiable, imperturbable, scouring and scrubbing, and behaving as if it didn't matter to her whether Falshaw carried on with her or not. She always had that air of not knowing what Sarah saw to worry about.

"At first, I believe, Falshaw made a great point of not leaving Sarah. But one night he never came near her. And then Sarah turned. The next night was a wet one, and she waited till Rhoda was in the back-yard or somewhere, and she locked her out. Up till then Falshaw had chuckled and grinned and gone his own way, reckoning on the child that had come to keep things straight. He excused himself for everything by saying Sarah'd got the child.

"But when he came home that night and found Rhoda standing on the front doorstep in the rain, he went for Sarah there and then and told her that if she did anything more to the girl he'd go out of the house —he and Rhoda—and leave her, as he put it, for good and all. He was sick of her. It was her own doing. She'd driven him to it. It had got to be, and she'd have to 'put oop with it.' Can't you hear him saying it? He hammered it in. She'd got the child. He'd given her the child; and it ought to be enough for her.

"Up till then she might have had some hope of getting him back, but when he began to talk about the child she knew it was the end. And she blamed the child for it. If the child hadn't been born Falshaw's girl would never have got her foot into the house. If the child hadn't been born she'd have had her strength, she could have turned the girl out and made her stay out. If the child hadn't been born she'd have kept her good looks and had a hold on Falshaw.

"Which," said Mackinnon, "was all perfectly true."

"How old was the child then?" Garvin asked.

"Let me think. It must have been about three."

"It was older than that when *I* saw it," said Garvin.

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"Up till then it hadn't suffered," said Mackinnon. "Sarah had been quite decent to it. But when she realised that she'd got it instead of her husband she couldn't bear it near her.

"The first thing she did was to turn it out of the bed where it used to sleep with her. They say she couldn't stand the touch of its body against hers. You see that was how she took it. You may think I'm unjust to the woman—Heaven knows she suffered—but if you'd seen her with that child and how *it* suffered—I've seen passion, animal passion, in unpleasanter forms than you can imagine, and I've seen some very ugly results of its frustration; but that woman showed me the ugliest thing on God's earth—the hard, savage lust that avenges its frustration on its own offspring. If she couldn't have Falshaw with her she wouldn't have the child. That was her attitude.

"When it was older she turned it out of her room—that long room in the front. It had to sleep by itself in some place at the back——"

"I know," said Garvin.

"Not that Sarah was actively or deliberately cruel. It was well-fed and all that. But it loved its mother—and it knew. My God—how she *could!* I've seen the child making love to that woman—making love, Garvin, with its little face and its funny voice and its fingers—stroking her; and if she didn't push it away, she'd sit and take no notice of it. But it went on.

"I've seen that; and I've seen Rhoda kiss it and give it things when its mother wasn't looking. Rhoda was always good to it. But it would go from Rhoda to its mother any day.

"That was when it was little. She'd suckled it, you see, before she took a grudge against it.

"At last she took to locking her door against it. Once Rhoda found it beating on the door and crying the house down, and she took it into her own bed.

"Rhoda slept in the servant's room, the room you have now.

"All this came out at the inquest, mind you, when Rhoda gave evidence. Lots of things came out. It seems that when Falshaw was annoyed with his wife or she with Falshaw, she vented her annoyance on the child. She found out that was the way to hurt him. For instance, Falshaw had dug a little garden for it at the bottom of the orchard. And it made the child happy. She used to go running backwards and forwards from the stone tank to the garden, watering it from a little cup that Rhoda gave her. Rhoda and Falshaw used to play with her there. One day Mrs. Falshaw found them at it. And she took the cup from the child and broke it to pieces in a fury, and stamped on the garden till she'd destroyed it. Just because Falshaw made it. Rhoda took the child into the house so that it mightn't see what its mother was doing. She got that in at the inquest, too. But she shielded Falshaw so well, and made the case so black against his wife, that it was considered to damage her evidence.

"And here's where you come in. When the child couldn't get into its mother's room it used to go across to Rhoda's, and creep into her bed

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and cuddle up to her for warmth. It was always cold. It fretted, you see, and though it was well-fed its food didn't do it any good. I was always being called in. Once I spoke my mind to Sarah Falshaw, and she told me I didn't know what I was talking about.

"Then, one night, it went into Rhoda's room and found Falshaw there.

"And I'm inclined to think, Garvin, that you saw what it saw. For Falshaw turned round and cursed it. Heaven knows how much it understood. Falshaw may have frightened it. Anyhow, it had some kind of fit—the first, I believe, it ever did have.

"After that it was afraid of Falshaw and of Rhoda, though it had been very fond of both of them. Oddly, enough, it never was afraid of its mother. Account for *that* if you can."

"What happened," said Garvin, who didn't attempt to account for it, "when Effy died?"

"Falshaw sent Rhoda away, wouldn't have anything more to do with her. His wife blamed them both for the child's death, and Falshaw blamed himself. It sobered him. He's been a good husband to that woman ever since.

"It's queer, Garvin—but in one way it hasn't changed him. He still reckons on the child, the child that Mrs. Falshaw insists will be born dead. It may be. But it's far more probable——"

"What is?"

"That Sarah Falshaw will go off her head. That," said Mackinnon, "is what *I'm* waiting for."

They were silent a long time till Garvin spoke.

"But, Mackinnon, what do you make of it? Of my seeing these things? It's a series of hallucinations, if you like. But a series, and it all tallies. On your own showing it all tallies."

"It does."

"What I can't get at is *why* it tallies—what makes me see?"

Mackinnon brooded, while Garvin excitedly went on.

"Is it, do you suppose, suggestion? Or some influence given off by these people—by their evil consciences?"

"Or," said Mackinnon gravely—"their evil."

XI

It was morning. Garvin was sitting in the field under the plum-tree, staring at the house in the Bottom, the house that seemed to stand always in the twilight, to gather upon its walls a perpetual dusk.

It knew no sun, only degrees of twilight, dark and clear. Yesterday under a grey sky it had been drenched in gloom. To-day, when the south was golden white with the sun, when the hot air quivered like water over the grass tops in the field, the house stood as if withdrawn into its own grey, sub-lucid evening, intolerably secret, intolerably remote.

And now he knew its secret. "Their evil" saturating the very

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walls, leaking through and penetrating those other walls, the bounds of Garvin's personality, starting in him a whole train of experience not his own.

Their evil. It had been for Mackinnon an immense admission. It went beyond all accepted theories of suggestion; and considering what Mackinnon's information was compared with his, Garvin couldn't see that he could very well have gone further. The doctor had watched the outside of events; whereas he, Garvin, had been taken into the invisible places, into the mystic heart of suffering. He knew the unnamed, unnameable secret of pity and fear.

These things had become the substance of his innermost self.

His knowledge, overlaid by his own adult experience, had been a little tangled and obscure; Mackinnon's revelations had served to make it orderly, clear, complete. From that tale, half-savage, half-sordid, from that tragedy of the Falshaws, from that confusion of sombre lusts, and unclean, carnal miseries, there emerged the figure of the child Effy, tender, luminous, spiritual, unspeakably lovable and pure.

He knew now what had happened to him. He had been made the vehicle of that spirit; he had been possessed, divinely coerced by Effy. What he had seen he had seen with Effy's eyes, with Effy's awful innocence and terror. He had slipped the intangible bonds, to become one (Heaven knew how) with that slender, fragile being, broken by the invasion of a knowledge out of all proportion to its understanding. For Effy's vision of evil had been thus immense and horrible because it had been so obscure, so unintelligible. He could not doubt that he had shared to some extent the child's malady.

But all that had been only for a moment. What really possessed him and remained with him was Effy's passion. Effy's passion (for the mother who had not loved her) was *the* supernatural thing, the possessing, pursuing, unappeasably crying thing that haunted the Falshaws' house. Effy's passion was indestructible. It was set free of time and of mortality. He could not detach Effy from her passion and think of her as in a place apart. Where it was there she was also.

As far as Garvin could make out from his experience, the place of the blessed or of the unblessed was not by any means a place apart. There were no bounds and partitions between flesh and spirit, the visible and invisible. He had seen Effy's spirit as flesh.

He asked himself why he had seen it? Why he and not any of the Falshaws of whose flesh she was? Falshaw and Anny had given him a hint. He saw Effy because he was not afraid to see her. Fear was the great blinder and divider. Falshaw could see that.

But hadn't Falshaw, in his moment of inspiration, seen further? Wasn't it Effy's pity that had spared them? She hadn't hurt them—she had never hurt anyone in her life. She hadn't pressed them hard.

Under Effy's pressure, her continual pursuing of him, Garvin's "Why?" had come to mean "For what reason? To what end?"

Mackinnon's story had enlightened him. He was the intercessor between Effy's passion and the Falshaws' fear.

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Effy's suffering had endured with her indestructible, unappeasable passion. It was through him, Garvin, that her passion clamoured for satisfaction and her suffering for rest.

She had come back (so he made it out) to recover the love that had been withheld from her. She pursued them all; but, if her father and Anny were afraid of her, her mother was mortally afraid. And it was her mother that she wanted to get at. She could only get at her mother through Garvin, who had no fear.

It was clear to Garvin that Mrs. Falshaw divined what purpose he had been put to. Her fear divined it. And how, he now asked himself, was he, the intercessor, going to break down her fear? Plainly she, like her husband, was relying on Effy's pity to protect her from the vision of Effy. It was a sort of moral support to her; and morally the woman was already so shattered and undermined that to break any prop might bring down the whole structure. Mackinnon had warned him of that. And there was her state to be considered. He had been at Falshaw's now for nearly a month. It wanted but seven weeks of her time. But it was borne in upon Garvin that if he waited till *afterwards* it would be too late—for Effy.

If he were responsible for Mrs. Falshaw, how about his responsibility to Effy? That—seeing the incredible relation in which he stood to her—was unmistakable; it was supreme. And couldn't he, who knew her, rely upon Effy too?

He watched his opportunity for three days. Then, on the evening of the third day, the last of August, the thing was taken out of his hands. Mrs. Falshaw sent for him of her own accord.

She was sitting in her chair in the kitchen and excused herself from rising as he entered. There was nothing unusual in her appearance—nothing, as far as he could see, premonitory. What he did notice was the unabated fear in her eyes as she fixed them on him. She was holding something hidden in her lap.

A chair had been placed for Garvin close beside her.

"Mr. Garvin," she said, "d'ye knaw it'll be a month to-morrow you've been here? I didn't look for ya to stop soa long."

"Why shouldn't I? You've been very good to me."

"Good to ya? Who wouldn' be good to ya? You're a good man, Mr. Garvin, else you'd a been afeard to stop. You'd 'ave tuk and roon like the rest of 'em."

She brooded. Garvin sought for words to break the intolerable silence, and found none.

"Ah can't blaame 'em. Ah'm afeard myself."

"There's no need. It's not a thing to be afraid of. It's a thing to pity, Mrs. Falshaw—and to love. Such a little thing."

She looked at him. Her obscure soul was at his feet. Up till now she had not known the extent and substance of his knowledge; but now she knew. It was not only that she respected him as one who had seen the thing she feared and had not feared it. She yearned to him; she longed

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for touch with him, as if through him she reached, unterrified, the divine, disastrous vision.

"It's true what they saay?" she said. "You've heard it?"

"I've seen it."

"Tell me what you've seen?" she whispered.

He told her in a few words. He saw her body stiffen as she braced herself to hear him. She heard him in silence until he began witnessing to Effy's form, her face, her features; then she gave a low moan of assent. "Thot's her. Thot's Affy."

She now uncovered the thing she had held hidden in her lap. "Was it like thot?" she said. "Would you knaw 'er from thot picture?" She gave it him. It was a photograph of a much younger child than Effy as he had seen her.

He hesitated. "Yes. Just. She's a little older than this and thinner—ever so much thinner."

"Thot's Affy at three year old. She was seven when she died. She'd be ten year old to-day. To-day's 'er birthday."

Garvin got on with his tale as far as the child's coming to his bed. He told how he had received the little thing and had warmed it at his side. Hitherto Mrs. Falshaw had sat rigid and constrained, as if she held herself back from realisation of the thing she feared; but at that touch she trembled and broke down.

"You let 'er stay?" she cried. "You didn't send 'er away? You let little Affy stay with you?"

She drew back again and paused.

"She comes to you in 'er little night-shift?"

"Yes."

He wondered why she should ask him that and in that accent of fear made vehement.

"Thot's how ah'm *afeard* of seeing 'er."

She leaned forward to him.

"There's times, Mr. Garvin, when ah'm scairt for ma life o' seeing 'er, any way. And when the fear taks hold o' me, it strikes through, as if it wud kill the child. And so 'twull, so 'twull. 'Tisn' likely as ah should bear a living child. Ah'm not fit to 'ave un."

"Don't think of it," said Garvin.

"Thinking doan't mak' no difference. I doan't care," she cried savagely, "if 'tis killed."

"Don't say that, Mrs. Falshaw. Think of your husband."

That was not judicious of Garvin, as he saw. It stirred Mrs. Falshaw's devil from its sleep.

"Falshaw!" She spat his name out. "'E thinks child-bearing's the only cure for all a woman's suffering."

"He has suffered, too," said Garvin.

She softened. "'E's sot on it," she said. "'E saays if there's a child about the plaace, there'll be an end of the trooble. But I tall 'im if Affy's here, and she knaws, and she sees me takken oop with another child, 'twill be worse trooble for 'er then than 'tis now."

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"You know what her trouble was and is."

She said nothing.

"And you know that at this moment, in this room, there's nothing between you and Effy but your fear."

"My little Affy! 'Tis more than that. If ah weren't afeard ah should see 'er, ah knaw. But if ah were a good woman ah shouldn't be afeard."

As she said it Garvin felt a light breath on the back of his neck. He turned and saw the child standing behind his chair. It slid past his shoulder, and he saw it now in the open space between him and the hearth-stone, facing Mrs. Falshaw. It advanced, solicitous, adventurous. It put out its hand and, with a touch that must have fallen light as thistle-down, it stroked its mother's face.

Mrs. Falshaw shrank slightly and put up her hands to ward it off, and the child slid back again. Garvin cried out, "Don't send her away—don't, for God's sake, send her away!"

Mrs. Falshaw and Effy seemed both unconscious of his cry.

He saw the child approach again fearlessly. It smiled, as with an unearthly pity and comprehension (he could not tell whether Effy had learnt this sad wisdom on earth, or in the place of the blessed). The look was superhuman. Urged by the persistence of its passion, the child hovered for a moment, divinely coercing, divinely caressing; its touch fell now on its mother's hair, now on her cheek, now on her lips, and lingered there.

And then the woman writhed and flung herself backwards in her chair away from it. Her face was convulsed with a hideous agony of fear. Then, even to Garvin's sight, Effy vanished.

That night Mrs. Falshaw was delivered of a dead child.

XII

That was at midnight.

An hour before, Garvin had been roused out of his bed by Falshaw knocking at his door. He flung on his clothes and went to fetch Mackinnon.

The doctor was up till dawn with Mrs. Falshaw. When he looked in again at noon of the next day he found the woman doing well. Her body, he said, was as strong as any horse.

He took Garvin away with him and put him up at his own house. It was better both for him and the Falshaws that he should be out of the way. Garvin was worrying. He held himself responsible for the event. Having been assured four times that Mrs. Falshaw's body was out of danger, he insisted on his fear as to her mind. Mackinnon had said himself that she would go off her head. Did Mackinnon think now that that was at all likely?

The doctor was cautious. He wouldn't swear to Mrs. Falshaw's mind. It might be better, or it might be worse. So far there had been no disturbing symptoms. She had behaved just like any other woman.

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She had asked for the dead baby, and Falshaw had fetched it and put it in her arms. Mackinnon had left her looking at it. There was no distress. On the contrary, she was placid and curiously appeased. The mere act of child-bearing, Mackinnon declared, was sometimes enough to set a woman straight who had been queer before it. And Mrs. Falshaw had been decidedly queer.

Mackinnon was now steeped in the physical aspects of the case; and when Garvin dwelt morbidly on his own possible share in it, he became almost grossly derisive, and refused to listen to any other view. He was fantastically fertile in suggesting things that Garvin might just as well suppose. But when Garvin began to tell him about the latest appearance of the child, he was angry and got up and left him. There was a real child in the village, he said, whom he had to attend to.

That was about nine o'clock in the evening. Garvin had settled himself comfortably in Mackinnon's study with a book, when he was told that Mr. Falshaw was outside and wanted to see him. It wasn't the doctor, it was Mr. Garvin, the maid was sure of it, that he had said he must see.

Garvin went to Falshaw. He was standing in the door of the doctor's house. The lamp-light on his face showed it fallen and undone. He held, half-hidden under his arm, an oblong thing covered with a black cloth.

His wife, he said, wanted to see Garvin. She was in an awful way. They could do nothing with her. She kept on calling for Mr. Garvin. They couldn't get the child away from her to bury it (he glanced at the thing he held under his arm).

Garvin left a message for Mackinnon and went out with Falshaw.

The short cut from the village was a mile and a half by the lane through the Bottom. As they trudged through the dark, Falshaw, between fits of silence, took up his tale. He'd been up to the village to fetch the coffin. The child was to be buried in the morning soon after daybreak. And the trouble was that its mother wouldn't hear of the burying. She'd got the child in the bed with her and she wouldn't let it go. They'd taken it from her when she was asleep and laid it on the cot in the back-room, and the nurse, she'd dressed it pretty. They were at their supper, and the nurse was out of the wife's room but five minutes when Sarah she'd up and she'd got, somehow stealthy, into the back-room and taken the child. And she turned mad-like when they tried to take it from her.

"An' what she saays is, Mr. Garvin, that you knaw all about it."

The high village road dropped to the lane. A mile off a solitary light shone in the Bottom. Coming from the village, they approached the house from the back, and Garvin saw that the light came from the long garret, Effy's garret, where the dead child had been laid.

Falshaw put the coffin in there and took Garvin to his wife's room.

Mrs. Falshaw lay in a big bed facing the door. A candle burned on the table beside her. A nurse sat at the head of the bed and Anny at the foot. Mrs. Falshaw lay slant-wise on her left side with her back

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turned to them. The candle-light fell full on her and left the watchers in shadow.

Falshaw took Garvin by the arm and led him to the bedside. They stood there without speaking, made dumb by what they saw.

The bed-clothes were turned back a little on this side, and in the uncovered space the dead child, wrapped in a flannel, lay cradled in its mother's left arm. With her left hand she held it tight against her side, with her right she supported her own sagging breast and pressed the nipple to its shut mouth.

Her face, thinned and smoothed, refined beyond Garvin's recognition, brooded over the dead face, in the stillness, the stupefaction, of desire accomplished.

"It's Affy. It's little Affy," she said. "She's afeard to suck."

"Thot's how she keeps on," said Falshaw.

"She's afeard o' me. She's afeard of her mother. You speak to 'er, Mr. Garvin, and tell 'er not to be afeard."

Garvin bent over the body, and she whispered fiercely, "You tell little Affy, sir."

"Let me look," said Garvin.

Mrs. Falshaw closed her eyes. As Garvin laid his hand on the dead child she drew back a little. Her breast dropped from its dead lips.

"Now," he heard Falshaw muttering at his elbow. And some innermost voice in him replied, "Not yet."

"There's Affy now. Standing by the doorway."

Garvin saw her.

It was Anny who had spoken.

She rose, fascinated; and Falshaw turned. They stood motionless, gazing at Effy as she came. Their lips were parted slightly. It was evident that they felt no fear. They were charmed, rather, as at the approach of some wonderful, shining thing. (The nurse sat on, stolidly unconscious.)

"She's gone," said Anny.

She had passed out of their momentary vision. Her business was not with them.

She came—Garvin saw her—no longer solicitous, adventurous, but with a soft and terrible swiftness, an irresistible urgency.

As Garvin stooped suddenly and lifted the dead child from the bed, he saw Effy slide through his hands into its place. In Mrs. Falshaw's eyes there was neither fear nor any discernment of the substitution; yet she saw as he saw. She saw with sanity. Her arms pressed the impalpable creature, as it were flesh to flesh; and Garvin knew that Effy's passion was appeased.

EPILOGUE

A year later Garvin was on Dartmoor, working up Stone Circles for the County History. A letter from Mackinnon reached him there. It came as an answer to his wonder.

"There's a man in your trade living at Falshaw's. He doesn't see or

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hear things; and he's there for nerves, too. They tell me nothing *has* been seen or heard since you left.

"Mrs. Falshaw often talks about you. I saw her the other day, and she desired, almost with tears, to be remembered to you. The point she insists on is that you are a good man. I'm inclined to think, Garvin, that you knew more about that woman than I ever did. She is, I ought to tell you, absolutely sane—has been ever since that night.

"There's a little thing that may interest you. In Mrs. Falshaw's room—you remember it?—they've got a picture, an enlarged photograph of the child Effy, framed and hung on the wall. Under it there's a shelf with her things—a cup she used to drink out of—some tin animals—a doll. They suggest votive offerings on an altar of the dead. What does it mean? Just remembrance? Or—some idea of propitiation?

"You ought to know."

He did

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San Andrés

By R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Someone or other has said the dead have a being of their own, as we confess by saying such a one is dead, just as we say he is alive.

The author of the saying seems to have felt the dead had feelings and were not merely essences purified, quite separate and unapproachable by us. Few wish to see, even to think about, their dead "crowned with an aureole." We want them just as they were, just as we knew them, in their life. The rest is vanity, vanity of vanities, and all the creeds are impotent to help. At best they are an anæsthetic, such as curare, which holds the suffering animal paralysed, so that the operator may not feel the pain that it endures or get his hands scratched. So we grieve on, watching the trees turn red and yellow in the fall, blossom again in spring, and be alive with bees in summer, in winter swaying and cracking in the wind.

This is because we never really feel the dead have a distinct and real being of their own. In olden times, in Scotland, people thought differently, and it was held that too much grieving for the dead vexed them and broke their rest.

I remember once coming long years ago to an outlying settlement in the province of Buenos Aires, where all the people came, I think, from Inverness-shire; but, anyhow, once on a time they had been Scotch. Their names were Highland, but were pronounced by those who bore them after the Spanish way, as Camerón, and McIntyré, McLéán, Fergusón, and others, which they had altered in the current of their speech, so as to be unrecognisable except to those who spoke the language and knew the names under their proper forms.

None of these Scoto-Argentines spoke English, although some knew a few words of Gaelic, which I imagine they pronounced as badly as their names.

Four generations—for most of them had left their glens after Culloden—had wrought strange changes in the type. They all were dark, tall, sinewy men, riders before the Lord, and

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celebrated in the district where they lived as being "muy gaucho"—that is, adroit with bolas and with lasso, just as the Arabs say a man, is a right Arab, when they commend his skill in horsemanship. Having left Scotland after the Forty-Five, most of their forebears had been Catholics, and their descendants naturally belonged to the same faith, though as there was no church in all their settlement I fancy most of them believed rather in meat cooked in the hide and a good glass either of Caña or Carlôn than dogmas of their creed.

Horses stood nodding in the sun before the door of every house.

Packs of gaunt, yellow dogs slumbered, with one eye open, in the shade.

The bones of the last cow killed lay in the little plaza of the settlement, and bullock-carts, with cumbrous high wheels and thatched like cottages, were left as islands here and there in the great sea of grass that surged up to the houses, without a garden or a cultivated field to break its billowing.

Two little stores, in which were piled up hides and sacks of wool, supplied the place with the few outside luxuries the people used, as sardines, Brazilian cigarettes, figs, raisins, bags of hard biscuits, sugar, red wine from Catalonia, and Caña from Brazil.

Climate had proved a stronger force than race, and for the most part the descendants of the Gael were almost indistinguishable in looks from all the other dwellers on the plains. They themselves did not think so, and talked about their neighbours with a fine scorn as "natives," and were paid back in kind by them with the nickname of "Protestantes," a most unjust reproach to the descendants of the men who lost their all for their old kings and faith.

Protestants they certainly were not, nor for that matter very Catholic, for, as a general rule, people who dwell on plains, far from the world, have less religion than those who live in hills. Still, in the settlement of San Andrés—for the first settlers had called it after the patron saint of their old home—some of their racial traits still lingered fitfully. Born in a country where neither sweet religion nor her twin sister superstition ever had much influence upon the people (for who ever saw a Gaucho either religious or the least superstitious?), in San Andrés a belief in fairies and the second sight still lingered in men's minds, with many a superstition more consonant with mountains and with mists, than the keen atmosphere and the material life of the wild southern plains.

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Unlike the Gauchos and the Arabs, who bury, as it seems, in the most open place that they can find, leaving the dead, as it were, always with the living, as if they thought the pressure of a passing foot somehow brought consolation to those lying beneath the ground, these Protestants railed off their little cemetery with a high fence of ñandubay. The untrimmed posts stuck up knotty and gnarled just as they do in a corral, but all the graves had head and foot-stones, mostly of hard and undecaying wood, giving an air as of a graveyard in Lochaber by some deserted strath.

There, "Anastasio McIntyre, killed by the Indians," rested in peace. "May God have mercy on him."

A little further on, "Cruz Camerón, assassinated by his friends," expected glory through the intermediation of the saints. "Passers-by, pray for him."

Amparo, widow of Rodrigo Chisholm, lost at sea, had reared a monument in stone, brought from the capital, on which was cut a schooner foundering, with a man praying on the poop. Her pious faith in his salvation and a due sense of local colour showed themselves in a few lines of verse in which the poet, whilst deploring the sad fate of Roderick, cut off so far away from wife and family, was confident that heaven was just as close at sea as on "la tierra firme," and that the Lord High Admiral Christ watched over seafarers.

Such was the village, or, as the Gauchos used to say, the "pago," for, for a league or two on every side, these Scoto-Argentines were the chief settlers upon the land. Indians occasionally harried their flocks and herds, and burned outlying ranches, but nowhere found stouter resistance than from the dwellers in San Andrés, so that, as a general rule, they used to leave the settlement alone.

The patriarchal manners which their forefathers had brought from the Highlands, joined to the curious old-fashioned customs common in those days in Buenos Aires, had formed a race apart, in which Latin materialism strove with the Celtic fervour, and neither gained the day.

A grave sententiousness marked all the older men, whose speech was an amalgam of strange proverbs, drawn from their daily lives. They used to pass their evenings playing the guitar and improvising couplets, whilst the square bottle of trade gin went round, each sipping from the same glass and passing it along. "Never go to a house to ask for a fresh horse when you see that the dogs are thin," one tall, red-bearded man would say, to which his fellow answered, "Arms are necessary,

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but no one can tell when." "A scabby calf lives all the winter and dies when spring comes in," and "When a poor man has a spree something is sure to turn out wrong with him," were specimens of their wit and humour, not much inferior, after all, to those recorded of much greater men than they in serious histories.

Sheep-shearings and cattle-markings were their festivities, and now and then, on their best horses, loaded down with plate, they tilted at the ring. The grassy pampa, stretching like the sea on every side of them, but broken as with islands here and there by white estancia houses set in their ring of peach groves, limited their horizon, just as a sailor's view is limited on board a ship to a scant league or two.

In that horizon all of them were born, and most of them had never passed outside of it, except some few who upon rare occasions had gone to Buenos Aires with a troop of cattle, and had returned to talk about its wonders for the remainder of their lives.

Still, none of them were boors, but had the natural good manners both of the Gaucho and the Highlander. The forms of courtesy were long and ceremonious, and when friends met upon the plain, reining their horses in to show how sharply they were bitted, they used to ask minutely after each other's health and of the state in which each member of the family found himself, and then, with an inquiry after a strayed colt, touching their stiff-brimmed hats with a brown, weather-beaten finger, just slack their reins a little, and separate, each going at a slow canter through the grass, the wind blowing their ponchos out like sails, and making their long hair wave about like a great bunch of water-weeds moved by the current of a stream.

This was the settlement which no doubt long ago has turned into a town, with modern improvements, electric lights and drains, beggars and churches; and the few settlers of the older type most probably have all retired into the wilder districts or become millionaires by the increasing value of their lands.

There, though, the older spirit ruled, and the men who spoke Gaelic, or even those whose fathers once had spoken what they called "el Gaelico," were looked upon as the interpreters of the spirit of the race. Of these Don Alejandro Chisholm was the chief.

Tall and grey-bearded, he had that look of shagginess which marks the Highlander. Though he knew but a few words

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himself, his father used to croon old Gaelic songs, and all his childhood had been passed listening to the traditions which his people treasured in their minds. Somehow they looked upon them as their chief distinction, and seemed to feel by their possession that they were in some way or another superior to the rest of those with whom they lived, the men who passed their lives caring for nothing but the present, whilst they lived in the past.

Don Alejandro used to say : " A native has very little soul. When a friend dies he never thinks of him again, and still less sees him. We, on the other hand, have glimpses now and then of those who leave us, but whose spirits hover about the places that they love."

His daughter, Saturnina, a tall, dark girl, willowy and slight, had married Anacleto, her first cousin, and thus, as her father, with true Highland pride in lineage, used to observe, had never changed her name. Her husband, Anacleto, was an amalgam of the Scot and Argentine. Speaking no word of English or of Gaelic, he yet esteemed himself as half a foreigner, although he was a Gaucho to the core. He and his wife were married in a church, a circumstance which marked them out, and people speaking of them used to say they were the couple " married in Latin," which gave them much consideration and a sort of rank. Whether because of the unusual sanctity that blessed their union, from accident or natural causes, their marriage was so happy that throughout the settlement people spoke of a happy couple as being as well mated as " el matrimonio Chisholm," and looked on them with pride, as being somehow on a different plane from those who perhaps were married by some ambulatory priest after their children had been born.

They had no children, and perhaps on that account were more attached to one another than are those couples whose love is, as it were, dispersed, having more objects on which to spend itself.

There seemed to grow between them that curious identity of mind which comes to all women and all men who have lived long together, but in their case was so much marked that they divined beforehand each other's thoughts, and acted on them almost without words. On the long journeys which the husband took with cattle his wife used to declare she always knew all he was thinking of, and he, on his return, either to please her or because she really had guessed right, always confirmed her words. The idea of death sometimes must have

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presented itself before their minds, but, like most happy people, probably only as a calamity, which might befall humanity in general, but could not touch themselves.

Don Alejandro, who in his long life had seen misfortunes, and was the last of all his race except his daughter, used to look sadly on them, and, shaking his grey head, say with a sigh : " God grant I may not live to see the death of either of them. The children, though it is a bad comparison, Lord pardon me for likening Christians to brute beasts, remind me of two horses that I had that followed one another. One broke its neck out ostrich-hunting, and the other never seemed right, and pined in misery after its friend had died."

The inevitable came, when Anacleto was away, far on the southern frontier, out on the boleada, beyond the Napostá.

Never before had he been so long separated from his wife. Three months had passed, and now, as he drew close to San Andrés, riding a tired horse, brown, dirty, and with the oppression that the north wind often brings in Buenos Aires weighing upon his mind, the well-known objects seemed to rise out of the plain, just as an island seems to rise out of the sea, although the men on board the ship know it is there, and have been laying off their course to make it, since the beginning of their voyage. He saw the peach montés which he had known from childhood circling his neighbours' farms. He crossed the sluggish, muddy stream, bordered with dark, green sarandis, hitting the pass with the unerring accuracy of the man born upon the plains. Feeling his horse's mouth, he touched him with the spur, and struck into a lope. Passing the little inequalities of ground, the swells and billows which the dwellers on the pampa know as lomas or cuchillas, and recollect as well as Scotchmen recollect their hills, though they are almost imperceptible to strangers, he saw the well-remembered old ombú tree of the settlement. Eyes just as keen as were his own had seen him, too, and to his great surprise a horseman galloped out to meet him, and as he came a little nearer he recognised the well-known piebald that Don Alejandro cherished as the apple of his eye. Sitting upright in the saddle, and swaying lightly, as if he had been five and twenty, to every movement of his horse, Don Alejandro rapidly drew near. Just about twenty yards from where his son-in-law was labouring along on his tired horse he checked the piebald, and stopped as if turned instantly to stone. " Welcome, my son," he said. " Your horse looks tired, but he will take you home quite soon enough."

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The words froze upon Anacleto's lips when he looked at the old man's countenance and saw how white and drawn he had become.

"Tell me at once!" he cried; "I see the tidings in your face of evil augury."

When they had drawn a little nearer Don Alejandro grasped his hand, and, after looking at the horse his son-in-law bestrode, pointed towards the little cemetery and said: "Let us go there, my son. . . . If we go slowly your horse can carry you."

Dismounting at the gate, they tied their horses to a post, and, entering, the old man led the traveller up to a little mound.

"Underneath this our treasure lies," he murmured gravely, and with the air of one who has got done with tears after long weeks of grief.

They stood and gazed, holding each other's hands, until Don Alejandro said: "Weep, son, for God has given tears for the soul's health. . . . Laughter and tears are the two things that lift us higher than the beasts."

His son-in-law threw himself on the grave, driving his fingers into the black soil, and lay there tired, dirty, and unkempt, like a great wounded bird.

At last he felt a hand upon his shoulder, and heard a voice, which seemed to come from a great distance, saying: "Come, let us go now, and let our horses loose. In half an hour it will be night."

When they had reached their home they both unsaddled. The piebald, with a neigh, bounded away into the night, but Anacleto's horse stood for a moment, and then lay down and rolled, and, rising, shook the dust out of his coat, just as a water-dog shakes himself after a long swim.

"He will do well," Don Alejandro said. "When a horse rolls like that after a journey it is a sign that he is strong."

Over the maté, seated round the fire, on the low, solid wooden benches men used to use out on the pampa, the wanderer heard of how his wife had died.

Next day he passed seated upon her grave, silent and stupefied with grief.

Then for a day or two he lounged about, going down to the cemetery at intervals and looking through the posts like some wild animal.

Weeks passed, and he still roamed about, speaking to no one, but riding off across the plains, returning always just at sundown, to tie his horse up close to the cemetery gate and stand with his head pressed against the bars looking towards

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the grave. At last Don Alejandro, fearing that he was going mad, as they sat at the end of a hot day, began to speak to him, saying: "It is not well to grieve too long. It is, as we may say, a selfishness. My father, who knew the older generation, those who lost everything for their religion and their king, had listened in his youth to all the lore that they brought with them from that far region where, as they say, the mist blurrs everything. My father spoke 'Gaelico'"—he said the word almost with reverence—"and those who spoke it always were versed in the traditions of our race. He used to tell me that to grieve for the dead beyond due measure disturbed them in their graves, and brought their spirits weeping back again. So I have dried my tears." As he said this he drew his hand across his eyes, and, looking at it, saw that it was dry.

"Grieve no more, Anacleto. We cannot call her back to us alive. To pain the spirit by our selfishness, that would be cowardly."

They sat till it was almost sunset, and then Don Alejandro went down to the corral to see the animals shut in, just in the way that he had gone each evening for the last forty years.

The sun set in a glare, the hot north wind blowing as from a furnace, making the cattle droop their heads, and bringing troops of horses, with a noise like thunder, down to the water-holes.

The teru-teros, flying low, like gulls upon the sea, almost unseen in the fast-coming darkness, called uncannily. The tame chajà screamed harshly behind the cattle-pens.

A boy, riding upon a sheepskin, drove the tame horses into the corral.

The sheep were folded, and in the dark leaves of the old ombú beside the door the fire-flies glistened, and from the pampa rose the acrid smell that the first freshness of the evening draws from the heated ground. Coming out of the rancho Anacleto looked across the plain.

His eyes were full of tears, but with a gulp he choked them, and muttering to himself, "No, it would be cowardly to break her rest, Don Alejandro says so; he had it from his father, who spoke Gaelico," he slowly lit a cigarette, and in the last rays of the light, watched the smoke curl up in the air, blue and impalpable.

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Vagabond

By Herbert Shaw

THERE was once a man who was king to a woman; and she was lonely and tired when she met him, so that these were great fine days for her. They loved the hills and children and the city. Life was a pageant of stupid people that danced for them alone. She took her gift of the pageant with both hands; and, alone in her room by night, when none should know, she would speak to him, for he was always in her mind. And she would say:

"Did I please you this afternoon, when we walked together. Why were you suddenly silent, just after I laughed with you at the shadows of the clouds upon the hills? Did I say anything then that was wrong? Oh, I love you sometimes, and I hate you sometimes, and I don't know which is worse."

So she would talk to him, while elsewhere he slept soundly. For she knew that these days were too good to remain, and always she feared the end.

In a dim way the man knew how much he was to her. "You are dear and very lovable for me," he said. "I am not worthy; I am vagabond."

"You are king," said she to herself. But aloud she pretended that she did not understand.

"There is no city wide enough to hold me, till I have known all the cities of the world. There is no house strong enough to bind me with its walls. I do not know if you will understand."

"No," said she, again pretending, and her lips were parted. But her heart understood and was in pain.

"I do not know why these things were put in me . . . it is torment not to obey. I am the servant of my weak will and my wandering desire. There is that in my blood which calls. So I would not wrong you. If you are satisfied with to-day, it is well. To-morrow . . . "

It was in an avenue of trees, made good with sun, that he said this. It was a place unpeopled, far from the city.

"I do not want to-morrow," she said, quite slowly; but her face was troubled.

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" You are sure you are satisfied."

" Yes, yes," she cried, and held him long with her kisses.

For because she was a woman she lied. And now her fear was greater still; and veiling her happiness always was the day when he should go. Often through that winter he would look at her, and faintly understand.

When the spring came he was more restless even than before; and his eyes were very tired with the streets of the city. Of nights he saw in dreams far places and far clean towns; and was already their friend, though he had never seen them. She did not come to his dreams at all. In the days the sight of any stretching road, afar off from a high place, or close as he came towards it, was a spur to his leaping blood. The road was life. There was nothing beside the road. It was eternal change alone that made life possible to be borne.

They sat in a room of the city by night. And his eyes saw clearly through the walls, and beyond the long miles of clustering houses that closed in upon him as a trap. It was given to him at this hour (or so he thought), to see the colours of all Life. They were warm and vivid and fine, while she looked at him, silent and in fear. And he said, " I must go."

They went out into crowded streets that were faint and unreal for him. The noise of them that passed was vague and a blur; the traffic of them was a grey smear before his eyes. In the streets they cried the news of the world. And on her was the terrible loneliness to come; and there was no news nor any world for her henceforth. They passed into dead streets where their footsteps echoed; and only dim slits of light above the doors showed that some suffered to live in these.

" Why do you put me so high ? " said he; and she said for answer, " Why do I remember everything that you say to me ? "

" I have done wrong. You are very dear to me."

" That is a great deal for you to say," she said, half mocking. For he had never spoken thus to her before. " I took your terms." And she shrank from his touch upon her arm. She would not let him kiss her till he went.

" God keep you," he said.

" God give you everything that is good," said she. But when she reached her lonely room she told herself that she had done with God. She prayed for death. And she laughed a laugh which was more sad than any weeping. But presently God sent her tears, because she had loved children and the hills that He had made.

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Through many years the man took his delight of the endless roads. And he met them who were wanderers like himself. Over all the known earth they were linked together by their restless blood. They smiled without envy as they passed great houses in the dark. They were the great clan of the unknown who sometimes, by a miracle, send forth one to stir the world. When they met in a city they talked as brothers of a steadfast house. Rejoicing exceedingly at meeting they yet said "Good-bye. The things you wish be yours," and passed on. And they put their glasses down, and at the door went separate ways.

There were women who desired him in these years, for he was different from other men. It was a little thing to him that he laughed with them and they were glad. It was a little thing to him that when he left that city for another they sat and cried by open windows as they stared into the dark of the night. The dreams of their hearts heard his footsteps plainly on the free road beyond the gates.

The message and the spirit of the road were so clear to him after a while that he longed to put them down for other men. He tried, and failed; and he was an angry rebel because, for a long time, this was not permitted. The soul of the clean and windy earth was one with him; so that he cried out in agony at the tawdry interpretations of it that other men had made. They refuged in warm houses and were afraid to wander; and men took their words for truth. He reached a great city where they lived and fought bitterly with themselves; and he went to them and said, "This and this is wrong. Neither is it real or true at all." And he pitied them because they laughed at him.

"It is our work," said they, "and it has brought us all these things." They pointed to their houses and their gardens and their wives. "Who are you?"

They were fed with themselves. He left them, wondering a little, and took the road with a gentle rogue of a man who laughed at hunger and rain and sin, and so was happy. That night they came to a place which did not please them; but because they were tired they journeyed no further. They slept in a bare room, high up above the noise and squalor of the streets. Far on in the night when the faint traffic ceased he woke from sleep, and moved restless about the room. Presently the other woke also, to hear the voice of his friend.

"You dream," said he, "and there is no fire, and it is cold."

"I live," said the dreamer. "Here is a story of a man and a woman who loved. This they did to be happy, and the gods

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played with them. The road is in the story, too—the wind in the grass, the shepherd on his hills. I will not tell it unless you want to hear."

But though the other did not answer he told his story. Power had been granted him at last. The striving years fell inward, and he knew he was a king. As he told his story he lived; he was each of the puppets of his mind in turn—the man, the woman, the scorning bitter god. And the dream woman was the greatest of the three. He clothed her with all the fairest things of all the fair women of the world.

The city slept. In this mean room, at that hour, they were the only achieving men in all the sleeping city.

He finished. "I will tell it to the people," said he.

"They will not understand."

"There be some like us who will understand and know. I will write these things down, and presently the others will understand as well. Are they not good, that they should not be written?"

"Write them as you told them to me this night," said the other, as the day came soft against the blind. Later they parted; for now he would not be other than alone.

He wrote of the road and ships and men, of the city and the sea.

After a long time, when he had written and sweated much without any reward except his own great happiness, they came suddenly to him and wondered at him, when before he had not been even worth their scorn. They pressed upon him the counters of their market-places which they had built to themselves for gods. Each single glittering piece was a great god to some man on the face of the earth. There were they who schemed and lied to gather them together in heaps; and these clothed their women in rich garments, and made other men their slaves. It was decreed that without them a man could not live except under cruel and heavy whips. They pressed them upon him, and he took them, smiling, and gave them to those who were burdened on the road. The years passed, and the message came for his writing in many ways; and still no woman held him.

There had been ten years since he had first answered the call of the road. Although he was tired he was young. Still in his sleep there were places to reach, better than he had seen; there were stories to write about them that would be

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like white jewels from the East. Sometimes things failed him a little and were dim: the colours of the road ran together and were not plain.

He came into a city that was white and hard with sun; into the market-place, the city's living heart. Cattle and fowl and creaking carts; and the patient servants of the brown earth that yet were the masters of these. There were none to greet him in this city, but he laughed with all who had a mind to smile. And he spoke to a stranger child with wide eyes, who held a shy finger to her lips and would not speak. But presently her little fingers crept up into his hands and stayed.

The noise of this trafficking place was music to him, and all the moving colours in the haze of the great heat were grateful to his eyes. There came suddenly to him a desire for sleep, for rest, so strong, that he felt his very body weaken. He would have fallen but for the warm touch of the child's hand in his own. Noon called with twelve slow and even voices from the tower in the square. Noon came upon the city . . . and he was blind.

About him was the noise of the market-place, but for him they had drawn a curtain over the colour of the world. The child's hand fell from his, and the murmur of the voices ceased at his strange cry in the market-place at noon. A man came, wondering, to him, and he said, "Lead me to a room where the sun comes in."

They went away. The busy murmur of the voices in the market-place was louder than before. They climbed to a mean room, such as he had often known. He opened the window to feel the cooling wind of the earth, and stretched his hands to the sun. And he said, "Do you know me, that you were kind to me in the market-place?"

"I have read your stories, and I know you," said the other, "though I had not seen you till to-day."

"Do you dwell in this place?"

"I have nor wife nc. child in any place." He knew the meaning in the question. "I am a dweller in the world as yourself."

"That is why they put you there to-day then, for my aid. But I am for a long journey . . . and am no companion for a fit man."

"Am I not of our tribe?" said the other. "I will come."

"It is over the breadth of the land, and I shall not return with you."

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" I will come."

Now that night he could not sleep and did not care, for he said that all time was fit for his sleeping now. He sat by the open window while the other slept. He weaved a monstrous story of the burdened puppets that overran the world.

Under the new law that they had made for him he took the road again. When the noise of the town had slipped from them he said, " Lead me to Tregonda in the north."

" Have you kin in that city, that you go so far ? "

" I have no kin. You are my friend, but I may not see your face. Tell me if it is too far for you. If there is work that they call you to do—— "

" All time is mine till Death takes it from my hand. I am not bound till Death shall come to bind. No distance is too far except he comes."

They went through sunny and clouded days which were the same to him. It was a lifting and high companionship, that of these two ; and it was on this journey that he conceived the idea of the four great houses for the wandering men, which now stand as their sweet oases in the four corners of a restless world. Low-built and plain, made with a fine and simple craft, high-ceilinged and with wide corridors, they stand for ever open to the day and night, and any, rich or poor, famous or uncounted, may enter who can claim to be of the tribe. They enter in and take their rest, and go as they will ; and the things that are of their own hearts—their dearest stories and their dearest verses—they keep till they shall meet one another in these houses of the tribe. All the best thoughts and things created have been heard or read or talked about in the four houses at the windy corners. And in the winter fires burn without ceasing. All is as he planned on that first journey with the blindness of which he would not let himself be afraid.

After thirty days they drew near to the end, and his friend said, " Shall you stay for long in this city ? "

At first he did not hear, for now the road, near to the old known things, was home to him, and he was dreaming of the times he had often trodden it, long ago. When the other asked him again he woke from his happy dreaming. " If God is kind I will stay," he said.

Very early the next day they came to the narrow street that led to the greatness of the city he had desired, where the roar and clang are dulled in a fashion, but insistent unceasingly, to tell of the work of life. These grey streets of grey houses

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stood for the colourless work of the crowd in bondage day after day. All sounds he heard were plain to him. A shuffling step, a chance shout, the rumble of a heavy cart over a paved crossing—all these were as plain to him as though he could see. All was good. And over the bridge into the city itself the mighty sense of the river was with him once more. He leant his arms on the parapet, and it seemed to shake with the traffic's tides. He took the other's hand and said, " Lead me to such and such a place."

They came to a square that an archway and a narrow passage guarded from a busy street. The square was wonderful and quiet after the many voices of the city. And he said, " I seek a beautiful woman with dark hair. The house that lifts above the others was hers. If she is here, I stay. If she has gone, I trespass on you for three days more. There is no speech of mine good for the service you have done. Will you know my thanks ? "

" I will know." They waited in the shadow of a porch that bore an old carved motto of kindliness to men.

It was long past noon when they heard the faint echo of one who passed swiftly under the archway. He felt her as she came and did not stir. The other started. The footsteps went. " A woman came," he said ; the eyes that could not see were bright as those of a happy child. " A woman came. Was she beautiful ? "

" I saw a woman with dark hair."

It was all his answer, for she had cried her beauty away.

She turned, and a little cry came unwillingly from her at which the whole earth seemed shaken and changed. And the aching years she had suffered were a burden far more heavy than before. She longed to go to him, to cry out, to hear his voice, to feel his arms around her. He said, " I have come back to you. I am mean and selfish and tired, and the wrong I did you is like a wall. Why do you not speak to me ? Am I different, or have *you* changed ? "

She could not keep her trembling hands at rest. Her heart was a great wound that was greater than herself ; and in one moment which was a year of pain she asked all the gods she knew why he did not go, seeing her beauty vanished and dead. Only her hair was beautiful as ever. On the wall behind him was a mirror, framed in silver, which he had given her long since. She had cried her beauty away. In revolt at her

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unpitying loneliness she had not cared. She saw herself in the accusing mirror—there had been no message between them for ten years. Why did he look at her—and stay ?

" I have known women, but I have looked on no other as I have looked on you. I have remembered no other woman but you. Often your beauty has been with me by day, and I have held out my arms for you in dreams."

The silver mirror tore her heart across ; again she desired to cry out.

" I know you are beautiful still ; I know you have not changed. It is with you whether I take the road again. I am for rest. A city is refuge and can hold me now—for I am blind."

Her cry of triumph, of compassion, of release from the burden, was everything that she had ever suffered and everything by which she had been made glad at any time. " I will be your slave ! " It seemed to her as if all the crowded city must hear that cry and wonder.

He called her by the old dear names. He took her face between his hands, and caressed her soft hair, and told her she had not changed at all. She looked long at his open unchanging eyes. All the hours of her life had been for just that moment.

They stayed in the city, and for two years she was so quietly happy that it was almost reward for the eighty thousand lonely hours. She wrote dream stories from his lips, which had in them no sorrow ; and in these always there was something that made some tired man of the tired city feel happy with himself, even if it passed when the dawn came and the taskmaster called. He made many friends who loved him by reason of these stories. Sometimes in her presence he would talk to them of her great beauty ; and they would be amazed and silent for a little while. Then they would look up and see her pleading face, and shower praise upon her for the ears of their friend whom they loved. When they went from the house they loved her too until the end ; and they carried the memory of her, if they left the city, as a fine dear woman.

They were two happy children, and she would not let any thought of hers come in to spoil this glorious time. But she moved the silver mirror into the room where they slept. Every morning she looked into it, and searched the picture there ; and every morning she forced the truth from herself, and knew there was no change. His blindness was her shield. Always then she covered up the mirror till the next morning came. She feared if he should ever come to see.

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They went often about the city, and from the sounds of the city and his own dreams he took the new stories which were denied the colour of aforetime. It came that he was very silent. Neither by day nor by night would he go out with her to hear the sounds of the city. He did not wish to speak, but sat in a shadow that was strange to him. She asked him what she might do to help him. And he said, "There are five great stories that I would write if I could see."

She dreamed that night. In her dream he was suddenly blind no longer. It was as if he had waked from sleep, and she was by his side. He looked at her, and his face was different and stern; and he said, "What is this lie they have played upon me? I was tired and I came to peace at last, and now it is untrue. You are not she whom I used to know." And in her dream still he sat as one who could not understand anything in his world. She was afraid to speak. He turned on her and said, "It is you who have made this lie. You are a usurper, and you have hindered and brought me down. I will go out and find her whom I love." She clung to him and he shook her aside. And his footsteps, departing, buried her heart, for she knew he had gone for ever.

This was her dream. She woke to the horrid dark that surrounded her with a great formless shape of fear.

In the morning after the dream a man of the tribe came out of the old wandering time. He was the man to whom the first story had been told by night in an attic of a city far away. He talked long with his friend, for he was going to a new country. And at the door, when they were alone, he turned quickly and said, "Are you true wife to him?"

"I love him better than my life," she said.

He put into her hand a tiny phial that shone clear and wonderful and red. "It was given to me by a monk in Rome who swore it would lift all blindness except that of the soul. It was to be given in wine. He swore to me that in the exact space of a day blind eyes would be cleared and see."

Her fingers had no power over the tiny thing, and she feared that it would drop to the ground. But then she held it shut firmly in her hand. "Is it true?" she said.

"I would tell him nothing for fear his hope should lift and it should prove untrue. He will not know. He will be no wiser if you give it him, for it has no taste. What matter if it fail; but he was a man of learning, and I believe it will be as he said. I have prayed that it may be so. Give it to him and in twelve hours you will know," he said, and went away.

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Now when he had gone it was clearly told to her that his words were true, and that this red thing in her hand would do as he said. She knew that he would hate her in the first moment of his sight; and, whether that or no, even if he still was the same to her, all her happiness would be broken. How could she bear that he should know her beauty was a dead thing when he had lavished beautiful words on it again and again? This thing had come to break her after all the bitter time. She would give the wine to him and go. She must go forth lonely once again, with no hope for all time to come.

She made ready to go in secret. It was the price of his happiness that she accepted without tears from the gods. But when all was ready for her going she rebelled, and for seven days she fought with herself.

Everything of herself was his. She had withheld nothing; why should she let this thing wreck her after all the years? It should not be given to him.

For seven days the phial was untouched, the wine was unpoured; and she was very near to madness all this time. She lay sleepless by his side at midnight when her love rode triumphant over her at last. Only that moment would do, or with day she would fling the phial from the window, to break it on the ground. She rose and lit the lamp. Her shadow frightened her, and the clear red in the glass was a cruel and conquering enemy. Dulled with sleep when she roused him, he drank without questioning, and fell to sleep again.

While he slept she dressed and fetched all things for her going at the dawn. But dawn came, and the day, and she could not go. She must go directly at his first waking—if he woke to sight.

The hours crept, and she waited patient there. Outside the traffic grew in the strenuous passing of the day. Men went about their business and she waited there, heedless of the city or the world.

An odd whim took her. She pulled down the silver mirror from the wall, and rested it in front of her, where she could see and hate herself, that had once been beautiful. Noon sounded with twelve slow and even voices from a tower of the city. He woke with a great cry, saying that he was blind no more. . . . And she looked into the mirror, and started back; for in her face she saw the beauty of the dawn. In Rome a monk's face smiled.

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Falstaff's Nose

By Darrell Figgis

Dr. Johnson gave it as his robust opinion with regard to Shakespearean textual criticism, "that the reading of the ancient books is probably true, and therefore is not to be disturbed for the sake of elegance, perspicuity, or mere improvements of the sense. For though much credit is not due to the fidelity, nor any to the judgment of the first publishers, yet they who had the copy before their eyes were more likely to read it right than we who read it only by imagination." Having said so much in the way of general precept, he states it his personal finding in editorial work that: "As I practised conjecture more, I learned to trust it less; and after I had printed a few plays resolved to insert none of my own readings in the text. Upon this caution I now congratulate myself, for every day increases my doubt of my emendations." Such a discovery from a man little given to mental humility, perhaps, is not to be underestimated. Nevertheless, it is true that when he came to Hamlet's speech to Polonius, "For, if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion," etc., he accepted, and not only accepted but praised in exorbitant terms, Warburton's alteration of "being a god kissing carrion"; whereas the first was not only sense, but very finely exemplary of Hamlet's swift, elliptical, revolted state of mind, and the second, in addition to being but poor sense, was an effort after compactness and prettiness very little likely to have been attempted by Hamlet at any time, much less in his hour of wild, stormy thought.

Still, precepts are more easily learnt than put into practice, and Dr. Johnson's is valuable in the teeth of his several violations of it. Readers of Shakespeare cannot but approve the doughty doctor. After some familiarity with the Shakespearean idiom, it is generally more possible to make sense out of the text of the First Folio than out of most emendations of it; indeed, it will generally be found that such emendations give a strange sense of shock to the acquired idiomatic atmosphere. For example, there are two things that very

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largely go to creating the Shakespeare idiom, one of these being his impatience with a merely compact and orderly picture, his eager leaping from one swift metaphor to another swift metaphor in a continual forward progression; and the other, an equally swift and elliptical way of thought. The first is an impatience with the formal consecutiveness of imagery; and the second, an impatience with the formal consecutiveness of thought. Of both of these his work is full. Now, in the instance already given, both of these are the very atmosphere of the sentence as it stands in the First Folio, but both are dispelled in the orderliness of Warburton's emendation. Therefore, whether or no Warburton's suggestion be better than the First Folio, it is impossible to come to any other conclusion than that Shakespeare wrote the sentence as it appears in the earlier text.

But there is another element that goes to constitute the Shakespeare idiom; and that is, a rapid, almost startling, always beautiful picture, sketched in a few words; such a picture, indeed, as must compel us to believe that something similar to it had at some time passed under Shakespeare's observation, and had thus given the hint to his imagination. Instances abound. The most famous would perhaps be, "She sat like Patience on a monument, smiling at Grief," of which, so startling is it, the lover would be prepared to affirm that, as Shakespeare penned it, he had some or other definite piece of statuary in his mind, which limned itself in his words, swiftly and precisely.

Did even space permit, it would be unnecessary further to instance this last characteristic of Shakespeare's method of imagery, for by their very nature such instances stand out and claim attention. Yet there is one such that all trace has been lost of in the course of textual emendation. In a sense, it is the most beautiful of them all. Certainly it is one of the most noteworthy, seeing it can definitely be traced to his personal experience. Yet in no one present text does it appear. Each editor, and every editor, has conspired to pass it out of memory, and it would probably never have been recovered from darkness had not a fragment of his forgotten biography have come to light to give us its clue.

When, in 1603, Elizabeth died, and James succeeded to the English throne, one of the first acts of the new monarch was to extend a kindly wing over the whole field of dramatic endeavour. Years before, in 1599, a company of English players had visited Scotland, and he had then an opportunity

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of giving proof of his kindly disposition towards the drama. For the ministers of Edinburgh had passed an Act of Sessions prohibiting attendance at their plays. Forthwith James had summoned the Sessions before his Council, and commanded them straightway to annul their Act. Now, as King of England, he gave even a more emphatic proof of his regard. To the company playing at the Fortune he granted permission to be known as the Prince's men. To those playing at the Red Bull he conceded the right to pass as the Queen's men. But those playing at the Globe he took under his own patronage. Previously, with one break, in fact, since 1594, they had been known as the Lord Chamberlain's men; now they took rank as the "King's servants," and were entitled "freely to use and exercise the arte and facultie of playing comedies, tragedies, histories," and so forth. Not only so, but he proceeded to address all justices, mayors, and sheriffs, saying that not only were the players to be permitted "to show and exercise publiquely to the best of their commoditie" their "arte and facultie," but that "what further favour you shall shew to these our servantes for our sakes we shall take kindely at your handes." It was in this company Shakespeare was director and "householder."

Yet this was not all. When, in this year, the King's coronation had been celebrated, the plague had been prevalent, and as it was obviously unwise to permit any concourse of the people under the circumstances, the Royal progress through the City of London had necessarily been postponed to the following year. On March 15th, 1604, therefore, this duly came off, and for the purposes of this procession Shakespeare and eight of his colleagues received as a royal grant four and a half yards apiece of scarlet cloth to make their cloaks withal. Whether, in fact, they paced proudly in the procession or not must remain a doubtful question. But the grant is sufficient to prove that when Shakespeare's company became known as the King's company this meant that they took rank as part of the King's household, for to all the King's household this grant was made, and only to the King's household.

A matter of further interest is that in August of the same year Juan Fernandez de Velasco, the Constable of Castile, came over to England on an embassy of peace, and stayed at what is now always known as Somerset House, but what was then frequently spoken of as Denmark House. Here he was greeted by a goodly company, among them some gentlemen clad in

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the royal scarlet habits and cloaks, in the capacity of attendant grooms. During the whole term of his stay they were there to wait upon him in some or other serviceable capacity. That Shakespeare was among these is known by the fact that Hemynge and Phillips, as treasurer and business manager of the King's company, were paid for this service, for themselves and " some of their fellows," as " his Ma^ties^ Groomes of the Chamber and Players, for waytinge and attendinge on his Ma^tie^ service, by commandemente, upon the Spanishe Embassador att Somersette House, for the space of XVIII. dayes."

Thus it is obvious that Shakespeare held rank, not only as a dramatist and player, but also as a Groom of the Chamber. It is probably from his observation in his duties in this capacity that Shakespeare gleaned that experience that fills his later plays full of satirical comments as to the see-saw rivalry for favour in Courtly places. But a matter that weighs far more considerably at the moment is that, as a member of the King's household, Shakespeare would have to make his appearance duly at the Board of Green Cloth. This Board was so called because it sat about a table invariably covered with green cloth. It met under the presidency of the Lord High Steward, whose business it was to dispense the household moneys.

Having once started on this train of thought, the memory cannot but have recalled to its attention that this could not have been Shakespeare's first attendance before the Board of Green Cloth. Back in the Christmas festivities of 1594 Shakespeare, together with Richard Burbadge and Will Kempe, had acted twice at Court. And on March 15th of the following year they had been required to attend at the meetings of this Board to receive what was, in the money of the time, very excellent payment for their services. The picture of this company seated about a green-covered table could not have failed to imprint itself on his imagination; and it would be strange if he could not have wrought out of it some startling imagery that would hold and impress the reading eye.

Now it so chances that in the somewhat maligned First Folio, in the second scene of the second act of Henry V., at the Boar's Head Tavern, Eastcheap, Mistress Quickly had occasion to inform Pistol, Nym, Bardolph, and the boy of the death of rare Sir John Falstaff. She thus described it: " 'A made a fine end, and went away, an it had beene any Christome Child: 'a parted ev'n just betweene Twelve and One, ev'n at the turning o' th' Tyde: for after I saw him fumble with the Sheets, and play with Flowers, and smile upon

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his fingers end, I knew there was but one way: for his Nose was as sharpe as a Pen and a Table of greene fields."

This fell into the hands of the learned yet egregious Dr. Theobald; and so as to follow the exquisite logic of his train of thought it will be as well to give his note on the passage. Says he: "I have an edition of Shakespeare by me with some marginal conjectures of a gentleman sometime deceased; and he is of the mind to correct the passage thus: 'for his nose was as a pen, and 'a *talked* of green fields.' It is certainly observable of people near death, when they are delirious by a fever, that they talk of moving; as it is of those in a calenture, that they have their heads run on green fields. The variation from Table to talked is not of a very great latitude; though we may still come nearer the traces of the letters by restoring it thus: 'for his nose was as sharpe as a pen, and 'a babled of green fields.'"

Thus the "gentleman sometime deceased," and Dr. Theobald, happily long since deceased, came to the earnest judgment that Falstaff "talked of moving"; and, moreover, being "in a calenture" "ran his head on green fields." Thus, too, Dr. Theobald, in his turn, ran his head also on green fields, but whether in a calenture or not it is unwise to conjecture. And the result has been that a chorus of generous praise has followed this noteworthy emendation; one saying that if Shakespeare did not write it so, at least he would have accepted it so; and another, that the emendation in question is "probably the happiest one ever made in Shakespeare's text." It has not occurred to any to bring to mind of what sort was Falstaff's life and way of thought. Nor does it seem to have occurred to any to bring to mind of what sort was Shakespeare's pathos. Neither Falstaff nor Shakespeare would have indulged in wayward sentimentalities when direct thought and swift image best suited the urgent solemnity of death. Falstaff's thought, at his utmost bent of humour, was always philosophical; and this is proved in the very passage; for to demonstrate that he neither ran his head on, nor babbled of, green fields, it is expressly stated that the word on his lips was "God." Moreover, Shakespeare's pathos is short and sharp, voiceless sometimes; as when Falstaff himself was rejected by Prince Hal.

But imagine the picture that Shakespeare had before his eye! At his attendance before the Board of Green Cloth he would have seen quill pens lying on the table, with their white edges erect upon the cloth—frail and slender, like fairy scythes on an emerald meadow. He could not fail to have been

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impressed by the sight. There are numberless instances in his work that go to indicate him as one whom a sudden thought of beauty would catch, passing him into a vision of whimsical and timeless contemplation. It swept on him when he had to describe the disfigurement on Imogen's breast; and he passed to gazing into the well of a cowslip. It may have been thus he noted the pens that lay strewn on the green cloth. Or it may have shone on him at the moment of intellectual labour. It is strictly stated that Falstaff played with flowers, and flowers would inevitably suggest the green, and thus lead his instinct back to the pens on the table.

Yet, in whatever manner the vision swept through his mind, the image required is quite distinct and clear. Moreover, it only demands the alteration of one word, and would read: "for after I saw him fumble with sheets, and play with flowers, and smile upon his fingers' ends, I knew there was but one way: for his nose was as sharp as a pen *on* a table of green fields." How startling and vivid is the picture that forthwith is awaked. What a well of tears bubbles to the brim of the soul at the thought of gay, fat, old Falstaff brought so low that his nose may be likened to a quill pen, so thin and frail had it become. How inevitably the eye sees the picture of a quill pen lying on a green table, sharp, slender, and deathly white! How the heart is gripped almost to terror!

And let it be imagined, too, how inevitably the image gains from Shakespeare's habit of heraldic speech! He is for ever falling into it; and one need not be reminded of the player's description of "the rugged Pyrrhus," in Hamlet, as having his "dead and black complexion smeared with heraldry more dismal: head to foot now is he total gules." This habit of heraldic speech, like his continual use of terms in falconry, is even more than a mere mannerism in him. It takes rank as part of the Shakespearean idiom. He not only illustrates his meaning thereby, nor is he merely content to pun with it: it often gives an indefinable yet quite distinct colour to many of his phrases. So that when he likened the dying Falstaff's nose to one of the quill pens he had seen at the exchequer committee, so pale and slender was it, his mind at once saw the green cloth on which the pens had lain as an emerald field, and in the natural idiom of his mental speech, he promptly gave it an heraldic turn, thus making each sense play into the other, each indissoluble from the other.

It is impossible to miss the weight of this accumulated argument, derived as it is, not from any extraneous hypothesis,

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but developed from within the very nature of the case: from historical fact, from the likelihood of Shakespeare's instinct of pity, his idiom of expression, his visionary delight in a swift startling visualisation, from the completeness of sense demanded by the whole passage, from the demands of consistency in Falstaff's characterisation, and from the claims of the First Folio as being the only edition prepared directly from Shakespeare's manuscripts. All this is sufficient, good measure well pressed down and running over, in rejection of Dr. Theobald's fanciful emendation, which, in a greater or lesser degree, violates each of the above standards of judgment. Yet on the strictly caligraphic test the mere alteration of "and" for "on" vindicates itself as against the more elaborate alteration that holds sway in every modern edition without exception—every modern edition, that is to say, that does not purport to be a reproduction of the First Folio. Strictly speaking, such an alteration means only the deletion of a "d," since "an" and "on" are sufficiently similar in most modern penmanship for their distinction only to be judged by the sense of the phrase. And those who have had cause to examine any old manuscript in the Gothic script will not require to have the presence of such a "d" explained. Flourishes abound. The least occasion, or even the lack of it, is taken advantage of for a flourish. Some flourish down from the upper line launching itself beside the "on" before it journeyed upward to completion, would be sufficient to suggest a "d" to a rapid reader. In this connection it is worthy of note that ordinary writing on an ordinary width of page amounts usually to nine or ten words of fair length, and that the "y" in the word "way" of the previous sentence is at ten words' remove.

Such details, however, though useful enough as the completion of a demanded sense, are but of little account. What is of considerable account is that Dr. Theobald's violation of the text (a violation, as has been said, that every modern edition has approved) has obscured from us, not only a beautiful and characteristically Shakespearean piece of imagery, but also an eager fragment of personal reminiscence. Nor is this the only instance that we have of Shakespeare's keen observation, retentive memory, and transmuting imagination. But to decline from this on to "babbling of green fields" is to decline indeed. It is not only to decline from a grief that catches at the heart and stifles expression of words, into a mouthing sentimentality. It is to decline from a vision that is sharp and searching into a merely expressive form of words. It is to

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decline from the poet's eye to the moraliser's mouth. It was a declension worthy of the trim and sophisticated seventeenth century. Yet the declension might have prevailed, and the original beauty passed into forgetfulness, but for the fact that a musty document came to remind us of what once had been Shakespeare's courtly duty. And the fact that the recovery did come in this way is its own proof that it is just and accurate, and that we have indeed caught back to us the mood in which the greatest of humorists passed to his death in the mind of the greatest of dramatists.

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Letters of Wagner to his Schoolfellow, Apel

Translated by William Ashton Ellis

14

Herrn Theodor Apel in Leipzig, Neuer Neumarkt, Apel's Haus.

(*Post-mark: Magdeburg 22/1. Seal: R.W.*)

Magdeburg, *the 22nd Jan.* 35.

I was already half at Leipzig yesterday, at least half in the coach, my things all packed, good-bye said, when they wouldn't let me go without a pass. It was too long-winded a job to lay hold of a pass then, as it was half-past 1 already; taking counsel with myself, I go to Dankewarth and Trowitz,—make it up with them, and remain in Magdeburg.—Apparently I should have found you in a nice old mess,—judging at least by your letter which I received last evening. By all the powers above, how much longer is the thing to go on!—Imagine the rest for yourself.——

Meanwhile the alteration here has been completed.—Schmale goes away a few days hence, to return in about 3 or 4 weeks and take over the stage-managing of the Opera; Maier has that of the Play, and for the present of the Opera also. Accordingly the rôle of Columbus, with your whole affair, is in Maier's hands already,—and as I firmly believe, in the best hands. That is proved me by his *Charlotte Corday*, which came out with merely a rehearsal and a half, yet went admirably. It made quite a sensation in consequence. Maier understands his business to the roots; I was a good deal with him yesterday,—he sends his best compliments, and promises you the most punctilious zeal for *Columbus*.—But the point is now, to begin!—Bethmann isn't exactly wrong, when he declares he is making you sacrifices:—for instance, we could have brought out *Adler's Horst* already, if we hadn't had to let *Columbus* take first place because of the scene-painting; the same with other pieces, which he has to postpone for ever so long on your account now, and yet can firmly count on their success.—The scene-painter has not been able to begin yet, as the 30 thaler won't suffice to buy material,—so please send the remainder soon, that you mayn't have to ascribe the damage to yourself. Otherwise everything stands good, and just as you left it. I am living most retired, but haven't got to work yet; I'm in the throes of parturition [*Liebesverbot* music] and big to bursting. Yesterday I wrote Schröder-Devrient a long letter.

Minna and Haas send regards to you, the latter heartily, the former as well as she can.—I hope your affair has come to an issue now,—I tell

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you, nothing's to be done without an ache; in the *juste milieu* you'll choke yourself to death. Take the jaw-bone of the ass into your hand. Would it be any good my writing to your mother? Write to Maier and send money; it's high time a commencement were made—do you hear? —and I'm not in a position to fork out the needful myself.—My unrequited love has almost wholly vanished. Adieu, dear Samson. Adieu!

Thy

RICHARD.

I am very cross with Pohlenz; if they don't put on my overture by Thursday week, they may . . . me.—Tell him so.

18

Herrn THEODOR APEL in Leipzig.

(*Seal: R.W.*) *The 17th Feb.*

MY DEAR OLD BOY,—I was abominably melancholy, hypochondric and everything possible, when I got back here, I had enjoyed myself so much with you people. Hysel is stopping at Leipzig for some time,—has had a row, and is sulking.—The repertory has been rather thrown out by the Bauer's long star-turn,—and that touches your *Columbus* also, which is put off for about a week now. Gaps! Pfeiffer is leaving,—had a quarrel, sulking!—Misère, rot,—etc.! . . . No doubt you're amusing yourself vastly,—I can imagine it!—I shall be horribly steady now, and do a lot of work,—yes, I mean it—a heap of work,—my eye, the heap of work I'll do!

God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost!—Hear me, Planer, thou'rt the Holy Ghost!—I'm feeling bad!—O those æsthetic campaigns—to Russia—in the years 1811 and 12!—I'm becoming an idiot!—Accept these intellectual lines as token of my sincerest esteem and absurdity, with which I subscribe myself

Your Honour's Most obedient

RICHARD W.

(*Between this letter and the next came the stage-production of Apel's play. The following is the play-bill* [obviously printed before the postponement, though.—Tr.]:

Magdeburg Town-theatre.

Monday the 16th February, 1835
(*for the first time*),
COLUMBUS
Historic drama in 5 acts, by Theodor Apel.
The overture, with all the incidental music,
is by Richard Wagner.

The manuscript of the play is preserved at Ermlitz. Wagner's overture was published in 1908 by Breitkopf und Härtel.)

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19

(Address as before. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 11/3. *Seal: R.W.*)

My Theodor,—Your last letter quite immensely affected me,—you can't be at all well, and very natural tho' your present dejection of spirits may be, one feels it rather uncomfortably for the moment, and it is with a certain pain that I behold you now.—You're most unhappy, aren't you? —For my own part, I hardly know what relation could have a strong enough claim to contribute to your momentary peace and happiness. But why look so black at us poor Magdeburgers? You do us an injustice, —about which more anon.—

I am not much surprised about Schlesier,—some day you'll think quite differently of his opinion, and it's part and parcel of your present state of mind that you don't understand it; for if you understood him now, he'd treat you differently. In all his judgments on your details Schlesier consistently follows his view of your whole. He believes you haven't reached the standpoint, by a long way, which he now sets up for every one he is to accept as competent. He still mistrusts your inner clearness altogether, and regards you as all in the air alike with your literary culture and your knowledge of the world; just as he calls your whole condition a mere first impulsive snatching at the new culture, in no wise its comprehension yet, and still less conviction. Complete familiarity with an entirely new line of thought, especially when it runs diametrically counter to that in which a fellow has been brought up for over 23 years, can't possibly be the fruit of one feverish summer; and further, one spent in the company of a person like myself, who doubtless might convey his own information to you, but was far too great a friend of yours, and moreover, not in the position himself calmly to draw and regulate that line. You shrink from every one who doesn't open wide his arms to you, and in so far neglect each opportunity of testing and fortifying yourself and your convictions by the facts of the world.

And believe me, this Schlesier is by no means deficient in heart;— just consider his relation toward myself,—nobody could be more heartily and warmly attached to me. You shouldn't chafe against his outer side; you must overcome and conquer it. I implore you, get into intimate touch with him, and accord him and his judgment unconditional trust; —had you done so earlier, had you reduced a certain distance between you two before this, you would have spared yourself the unpleasant experience you now are reaping through his verdict on your *Columbus* and my own explanation thereof. His ruthlessness, however uncalled for upon this occasion, expresses his whole opinion of you, and in my eyes—so far as he includes in it your general direction—betrays a warmth of feeling I should never have credited him with. Schlesier, who follows your whole inner and outer bias with a certain aloofness, and doesn't yet approve it in the least, couldn't possibly give his approval to your *Columbus* either, and therefore was bound even to lacerate you with reproaches,—but it isn't his conviction;—I—your Richard—stick to my opinion, and shall not change it.—

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You are suspecting *us* most falsely; if Hysel's a cur, that has nothing to do with your Magdeburg *Columbus*. You're a hypochondriac. Rett came here immediately on top of the Bauer, and has been playing ever since; Pfeiffer is discharged,—reasons enough for your *Columbus* not having come to performance again. It is set down afresh. It rests with yourself to send your alterations.

I'm falling asleep. Not too much at one go!—another time more.—Adieu, my dear chap,—Adieu! Thy

RICHARD.

No [*sic*]: please go to Pohlenz this very instant, and ask him for positive whether *one* of my overtures—at any rate that to *Columbus*—couldn't be put into either the Grabau's * or another concert. Say I'm much concerned for it, and should like a speedy answer.—Do see to this for me, d'ye hear?—

20

(Same address. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 31/3. *Seal: R.W.*)

MAGDEBURG, *the* 31*st March.*

MY GOOD THEODOR, dear heart,—no doubt you'll have long been waiting for a letter from me, but I've scarcely found nerve enough even to bring off a couple of business epistles to Pohlenz. Ah, I am boundlessly wretched,—and the greatest misère of it is, that I don't really know why. An apathy toward everything, a state I might term the most odious indifferentism, if I weren't unfortunately differing on every head with my surroundings.—An indescribable fear and dread keeps taking me, that something's going to happen;—ah, there already tingles through my every limb that glorious Walpurgis Night, which won't return for me so soon! etc.—

Yesterday I despatched my score and parts of the *Columbus* overture to Leipzig;—I can't come to the rehearsal, for which I'm sorry, and have no particular desire to come to the performance, which is fairly égal to me,—remember that indifferentism! You know the overture quite well, so tell these people how it ought to go. If I don't come, please send me a faithful account of the performance and reception. Noise it about a bit. And then a main point: please don't forget to go to Kistner and to Breitkopf u. Härtel, direct their attention to the performance, and in my name offer them my overture for publication in case it pleases them. But report to me on this as well, do you hear?—

You repeatedly say in your letters: I am doing very well, better than you think,—and I'm ashamed of my premature comfortings.—*I'm*

* Demoiselle Henriette G., of Bremen, born 1804, married Alex. Bünau, merchant, in 1837. [N.B.—All unsigned or italicised notes are from those in the German edition.—TR.]

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doing disgustingly,—more so than you think,—psychically,—psychically!—Ah, the good soul!—I prefer thinking of you, as of the summer and warmth!—I've also bought myself a lovely poodle,—ah, the good soul! Ugh, I got out of bed the wrong side to-day! I give you a right hearty salute!—Adieu, my very dear old boy! Adieu!

Thy

RICHARD.

Please send me back the score and parts directly after the performance; I want them for next Monday!—

21

(Same address. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 4/4. *Seal: R. W.*)

MAGDEBURG, *the 4th April* 35.

To receive such letters as those of yesterday, be sent into a fury of rage by you people's boggling, and to cap it all, be told: "Only please don't believe that you've the right on your side this time,"—is decidedly too thick. A simple declaration of my dealings will make pretty clear to you what you folk have got upon your side:—

After hearing from yourself last Friday week that Pohlenz had set my overture down for April 2, I write to him at once, asking if it wouldn't be possible to make it a week later, as I could hardly get away then. Just after despatching that letter, I receive one from him, in which he repeats your announcement, with the remark that it could only be given at *that* concert. So I revoke my previous letter by return of post, and on Sunday [March 29] he receives confirmation of my arrival Wednesday forenoon by the express. Monday morning the whole thing alters, as the management wouldn't dispense me from the *Stumme* on Tuesday. I communicate this news to Pohlenz at once, and at 10 on Monday night a letter, the score and parts of my overture [*Columbus*] go off to Leipzig per express; so that they must have got there, by my calculation, Tuesday forenoon. In that letter I say I couldn't leave here until Wednesday noon, and should arrive early on Thursday: as I accordingly couldn't attend the rehearsal, I beg him to conduct the overture, give him a whole page of instructions regarding the temp. etc., and so minutely that any one could have conducted it. Certainly I add that perhaps it would be desirable for me, after all, to hold another rehearsal on Thursday. Then Tuesday I write to yourself [No. 20]—and you must have got that letter on Wednesday—that I shan't be coming to Leipzig at all, and therefore beg you to report to me on the performance and reception,—thinking to myself that you'd also tell Pohlenz I shouldn't be coming. Well, it may be that the post was late, and the parts didn't reach Pohlenz till Wednesday; consequently that, through nobody's fault, nothing came of the Wednesday rehearsal. But I still should

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have thought you'd have sent word to Pohlenz on Wednesday, or Thursday itself, that they weren't to expect me at all. *Now I learn*, however, that another rehearsal was actually set down for Thursday, the parts were duplicated for it, the instruments ordered, in short, everything in position to rehearse my overture. Pohlenz had received my *full instructions* for the conducting of it, you have the certain information *that I am not coming*;—the men are all waiting, naturally I do not turn up,—then, instead of *rehearsing* the overture *without me*, Pohlenz *dismisses the orchestra, and is in despair!*—Well, after this degree of want of gumption, *there's nothing more to say!*—Imagine each of the above words exclaimed a yard long, and my opinion of you people's conduct will dawn upon you!—I'm to apologise! For what?—For your being a pack of idiots!—My mother wants to know if I've gone cracked;—it's enough to make a fellow use his fists!—And even supposing that I hadn't written you I shouldn't come, at least the dolts—altho' expecting me—might have rehearsed without me, let it go how it might, before altering the whole arrangement!—But no: I shew Pohlenz how he's to take every crotchet, thus preparing everything for the event of my not coming,—in addition, I let you know the latter for a certainty, ———and you two . . . let the men just march off again!!! If I hadn't started weeping over it, I should have burst out laughing—and so loud that you'd have heard it in Leipzig!—However, I won't waste another word upon it, the thing's too utterly absurd;—my poodle would have made a better job of it.—

I shall write apologetically to Pohlenz, but simply out of pity for his foolishness, not at all because I feel convinced it's needful.—Let my mother hear the substance of this letter, and say I'll write to her as soon as I know anything definite about Kläre.*—On Monday a fragment of my *Liebesverbot* will be performed on the stage in costume.

Farewell, old chap—
full of venom and gall
Thy
RICHARD.

22

(Address as before. *Post-mark: Magdeburg* 8/4. *Seal R.W.*)

MAGDEBURG, 8*th April* [1835].

I received your letter of the 4th, my dear Theodor, yesterday; so you hadn't then received my blood-and-thunder of the selfsame date. It was conceived in a terrible rage, and altho' I'm naturally quite pacified about the object of that rage now, there's a touch of impenitence still clinging to me which at least flatly prevents my considering myself the one at fault.—No more on that point!

Your letter and your declaration of affection were of endless comfort

* Clara Wagner (1807–1875), Richard's third sister, then a singer, married to Heinrich Wolfram, also then a singer.

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to me yesterday, with their kind uplifting words,—I thank you most devoutly for your love, my dear old boy,—God knows if I return it! With Heine I often say: "What were there left, were it not for one's morsel of love?"—and is not friendship, then, far more than love, gratification-seeking love *v.* self-sacrificing friendship?—My dear good Theodor, see, a tear falls on my paper,—soft-head that I am! I have much, for I possess a friend, and dear God no doubt will give the rest!

Your question how our prospects are shaping found me very sore at heart;—I am leaving here for certain as early as the first of May,—for in the first place, Bethmann means to have no Opera at all the next three summer months,—and secondly, even if he wanted to, it couldn't be kept up, his business affairs are much too shaky.—I've passed 3 weeks without a farthing in my pocket now; it's a downright scandal!—I shall try and set my things in order here, then come to Leipzig for a while, and complete my opera there (the performance of the two duets from it aroused the fairest hopes in me). And what will you be doing?—I suppose you'll be travelling. Ah God, ah God, my whole being dissolves in bliss, when I think of travel,—but I am grappled with hoops of steel to the abominations of locality!—I shall lead a deadly dull life in Leipzig, I foresee;—but I don't feel lively when I look towards the immediate future, either: only of the distance do I think with rapture, tho' sometimes almost with a shudder! God, if the sun of Italy were to remain nothing except a Northern haze for me!—That would be ghastly!—

Laube is set free, at least from prison,—he's a prisoner all the same, tho', has to go to Liegnitz!—I wrote him the other day, and he has answered me;—I enclose you his letter, which will interest *you*. From Laube you'll derive a very different opinion [*i.e.* from Schlesier's] in your own regard, and if I'm not mistaken, you will get fond of him. Send me the letter back again; I value it much!—

Since I'm in so good a humour with yourself this month, I send you greetings from Minna, the good child,* and overlook your utter naïveté regarding her and me;—she's as fresh as ever, only sometimes pale!—Mad. Haas salutes you; Schmitt is going to Leipzig for Easter and after! Ah, and what shall *we* do there? Tell me, tell me! Write to me!—Be fond of me!

For life and death
Thy
RICHARD.

23

GUIDO THEODOR APEL of Ermlitz by Leipzig, at present in Frankfurt a. M.
Address to be inquired at the Police Bureau.

(*Post-marks: Leipzig, 19. May 35; Frankfurt, 21. May. Seal: R.W.*)

LEIPZIG, *the 19th April.*

The one thing wanting to complete my misery, my dear Theodor, was

* Not for another quarter of a century, if even then, does Wagner appear to have recognised that his first wife was nearly four years older than himself.—Tr.

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that you should already have left here; I feel so wretched, that I don't know what to do. Seldom have I been so quite forsaken; all my earlier associations and acquaintanceships have dissolved through lapse of time or circumstance, and I am cast back on no one but myself; whilst my own acquaintance is very disagreeable to me now, as I'm most repulsive in my own eyes!—I have been to see your family.—What's Schlesier doing, have you joined him yet?—I must try and finally clear up my mind about him, for now and then he strikes me as not merely two-, but three-faced. More on that another time. Laube sends you cordial greetings again; he is taking a deal of interest in you. Your mother begged me to procure her the Magdeburg manuscript of *Columbus*,—— [but] it may easily happen that they bring off another performance of it there now,—I have heard to that effect.

My money matters, you Angel of Rescue, are not altogether in order yet,—as the good God is aware! Had I only expressed myself still more precisely to you at that time [see No. 9], the time of the most furious crisis in my desperate plight! To be set entirely straight, and at the same time a little covered as regards my uncertain immediate future, I require 200 thaler still!—Don't be horrified, but that is so!—I have spoken about it to Römisch, who has behaved in an extremely friendly way to me and promised that—if I could possibly obtain him a written undertaking from you, he would provide me the money on the same terms as before. True, you may make me reproaches about my finance, but I daresay this augmenting of the debt won't matter to yourself at bottom,—especially now I can give you the joyful assurance that you may set your mind entirely at rest concerning the repayment of this loan. For when I paid my brother-in-law [Heinrich Brockhaus?] the 150 thr., he was quite taken aback, so I told him my whole relation to you in respect of this debt, and that it must be cleared by me within 2 years if I didn't want to put you in a difficulty—or rather, in any case;—then he exclaimed, in a burst of enthusiasm: "Well, if you're not in the position to at the end of 2 years, I suppose my credit will be good enough for Apel." I took him at his word!—

So I most earnestly beg you, grant me this last prayer in these sordid concernments, and conclude this account for my earthly prosperity;—ah, my God, it requires but a couple of lines from you,—lucky the man who is able to do so much good with so little! But it must be quick,—for if I am not solvent by the 1st of June, the thing loses its value. Later on I'll give you details of it all—when you will minutely comprehend a deal still incomprehensible about my debts,—only thus much for the present: I haven't been frank enough with you yet, by a long way!—

Talking of frankness, I cannot help taxing you also with a little want thereof towards myself!—Your journey—your sudden resolve on it, and everything connected with it, yourself and Schlesier, you sought to conceal from me, if I'm not altogether mistaken, with a singular scurry. It all came on me so cut and dried that even any questions were precluded me, and, I can't deny it, I have now and then struck myself as very foreign to your interests. I entreat you, do not let yourself be carried off your

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feet by every fresh appearance on your horizon !—I'm in a fix with regard to your family,—they keep pumping me, to make up for your lack of confidence in them by what they hope to elicit from me ;—only, even had I the will, I cannot assist them, for I have felt, and with some mortification, that I wasn't in sufficient possession of your confidence myself, to be able to satisfy them with a good conscience on various points.——

The above are scruples,—when I write them down, they seem by far too blunt,—a thing like that can only be felt,—and even then, not with a cold, but a warm heart. So,—a single open glance from you, old chap, and the bubbles all will burst !—Write me, d'ye hear,—and dispose of a piece of my life on the next opportunity ; indeed I owe it you ! Be happy and gay,—neither of which is

Thy
RICHARD WAGNER.

24

Herrn THEODOR APEL aus Leipzig, in Frankfurt a. M.

Zur Besorgung durch die Sauerländische Buchhandlung.

(*Post-marks : Leipzig*, 6. *June* 35 ; *Frankfurt.* 8. *June* 35. *Seal : R.W.*)

LEIPZIG, *the 6th June* 35.

To begin with, my dear Theodor, merely this :—Your fears are altogether groundless, and the reason why you had no letters for so long, as I have just ascertained from your mother, lies in their non-attending-to by Sauerland's book-shop ;—no doubt you will know this by now, also that you have given yourself worry and care once again without any need. Ah, those accursed worries and cares, they have deluged myself and bleached my hair before its time !—As a fact, I am well now, and your loving confidence has strengthened my well-being ;—no doubt you saw, dear heart, I never really doubted it, only please forgive my lightest qualms.—True, I'm still not clear concerning sundry things, but am on this : that you have the most adorable soul in the world, which I regard as my richest inheritance when I possess it entire and it is fully attached to me.

I am quiet, working diligently [at *Das Liebesverbot*],—also making progress with it. The *Columbus* overture was given at the Gerhardt's concert the other day,*—it was applauded, but doesn't seem to have particularly pleased the Clique, who happened to constitute the principal part of the audience that evening.—I was dissatisfied with the performance ;—I conducted myself, but it wasn't possible to get any fire into the men ;—the ending went at least as slow again as at Magdeburg. If

* Lidia Gerhard, born 1818, singer at the Leipzig Theatre since 1833 ; married Woldemar Frege later. The "clique" mentioned lower was that of Kapellmeister Stegmayer and Stage-manager Hauser, to whose obscurantism was due the strangling of *Die Feen*.

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your mother isn't fibbing, she liked the overture. I've a hideous Antipodium [*sic*] here;—no doubt I have all the unprejudiced upon my side, tho' I hardly know what to say [*hole in the paper*] to your perpetual prophecies of reputation here;—but the leading set is dead against me, and I'm glad to have discovered it on this occasion,—it's the Stegmaier-Hauser clique.—I had proposed to get myself and opera hissed off this stage first,—but I shall now have it translated into French, adapted by Scribe, and produced at the Opéra Comique; that's where it belongs, and out of Germany do I myself,—for which reason I mean to return to Magdeburg this autumn, as it's the nearest way out, woe is me!—Things are standing well there,—the Committee has taken over the theatre—put in Bethmann as salaried Director, and guaranteed the wages;—that's something like!—For the present I am going to the Music-festival at Dessau,—then on to Magdeburg for a couple of days,—thence to Naumburg and Kösen, where I intend spending about a fortnight with Laube. I've read his "Liebesbriefe" with great delight;—they have brisked me up;—fresh air on every page!—

Minna has been here, devoted 3 days to it for my sake in the vilest weather, without knowing a creature here besides, and without going out anywhere, merely to enjoy my company.—That sort of thing touches one;—it's remarkable the influence I have gained over the girl,*—you should just read her letters—they burn with ardour; and both of us know it isn't born in her.—She sends you greetings.—

Your mother has had me pressingly invited to Ermlitz for the holidays;—but it's impossible for me to commit the sin against you of spending this Whitsuntide on your estate without you, and amusing myself among your despiters. I shan't go. Why are you stopping so long in that Bingen hole?—Look here, do me one single favour, and don't go to Paris at present,—we'll go there together next winter;—do you hear?—

Now do me another favour, and fare thoroughly well; if you're still with Schlesier,—give him my kindest regards;—where will he [*hole in the paper*] now?—Enjoy yourself and be merry,—I have now made up my mind to turn a regular Epicurean in respect of my art; nothing for posterity, but all for one's contemporaries and the passing hour;—when I've got them safely in my sack, posterity will come of itself;—I ignore it, however. Adieu! A thousand thanks for your affection! Adieu!

Thy
RICHARD.

Send your letters to my brother; he will forward me them.

* "Mädchen,"—yet she was only three months short of twenty-six years old then, *he* a bare fortnight over twenty-two.—Tr.

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25

Address: Herrn Theodor Apel aus Leipzig, in Heidelberg.

Corrected: Per Adr. Apellationsrath Dr. Schreckenberger, Kissingen.

In R. W.'s hand: Should the addressee no longer be at Heidelberg, please forward this letter to his present place of sojourn.

(*Post-marks: Leipzig, 16. July 35; Heidelberg, 19. July 1835; Heidelberg, 20. July 1835. Black Seal: R.W.*)

Leipzig, *the 16th July 35.*

You dear, good chap,—but tell me, is it at all right not to have written me a single once in all this time; for I hope you received my letter, or rather, my answer to your last.—Seriously, I must see you again soon, things can't go on like this; what kind of misère is it, that has severed us? We have both been 5 weeks upon this earth without knowing anything about each other! Why don't you even ask after your creature,—for that I am,—whatever should I be without you now? O let me pass over this relation of gratitude to you; I should give way to my feelings too much to retain my composure, and I really have so much to tell you. Dear heart, what a wretch I should be, could I ever prove disloyal to you!—

I have been travelling for the last 5 weeks, and am so still.—Listen! —Among other excursions, I stayed the longest time at Kösen, where I was with Laube. O how cowardly and abominably this Schlesier has behaved to him! Imagine my *now* betraying you and your friendship towards me in the most despicable fashion and then hiding away from you, and you'll have some idea of Schlesier's offence. And the *lenient* way he's judged by Laube, notwithstanding, raises the *latter* so high in my eyes:—he smilingly declares him partially insane, that's all!——

I've been to Magdeburg, and my immediate destiny has shaped itself from thence again. For, theatrical affairs there have taken the best turning. Upon the representations of Burgomaster Frank, the King has granted his support, and promised its continuance, on condition that the theatre shall be managed by conscientious people. The Committee has undertaken that; and let it suffice to tell you that the thing's completely safe and honourably grounded now. All arms were opened to me; I closed with the Committee anew, on condition of an *increased* salary and entire control of the Opera. That is to commence in September, and I now am travelling for the theatre, to engage the operatic company. Much has been entrusted to me, and I'm now responsible for everything myself; but I'm glad to have to rely on my sole self, and so to see the thing completely in my power.—(Dear Theodor, was I to continue cutting that sorry figure in Leipzig? By God, that wouldn't do, and even tho' the greatest grief was bound up with it, the wrench from *you!*)—I depart to-morrow,—for Teplitz,—Carlsbad,—Prague,—

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Vienna, etc.—Ah, if you could only join me,—if we could press each other to the heart once more in that dear South, before the humdrum North again divides us! It would be lovely,—what do you say?—O answer me just this one question as quickly as you can;—write to Prague,—*poste restante*—you shall be able to discover me where'er I am. It *must* be arranged! And if it were,—O then indeed this summer, too, would not have been without good fortune,—I should have enjoyed the closest love of both a sweetheart and a friend!—

For the rest, I have borrowed the family misère off yourself this time, at Leipzig;—I have been playing your former rôle.—Nothing further!—But—O be glad—I'm full of strength and joy again—rejoice with me!—It's a stupid world—don't ever let us go under therein, but hold together!—I kiss you most fondly, my Theodor!—Farewell,—remember me!

Thy
RICHARD.

(*To be continued*)

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Under Western Eyes*

By Joseph Conrad

PART THIRD. IV

In his incertitude of the ground on which he stood Razumov felt perturbed. Turning his head quickly he saw two men on the opposite side of the road. Seeing themselves noticed by Sophia Antonovna they crossed over at once and passed one after another through the little gate by the side of the empty lodge. They looked hard at the stranger, but without mistrust, the crimson blouse being a flaring safety signal. The first, great white hairless face, double chin, prominent stomach, which he seemed to carry forward consciously within a strongly distended overcoat, only nodded and averted his eyes peevishly; his companion—lean, flushed cheek-bones, a military red moustache below a sharp salient nose—approached at once Sophia Antonovna, greeting her warmly. His voice was very strong but inarticulate. It sounded like a deep buzzing. The woman revolutionist was quietly cordial. . . .

"This is Razumov," she announced in a clear voice.

The lean newcomer made an eager half-turn. "He will want to embrace me" thought our young man with a deep recoil of all his being, while his limbs seemed too heavy to move. But it was a groundless alarm. He had to do now with a generation of conspirators which did not kiss each other on both cheeks; and raising an arm that felt like lead he dropped his hand into a largely-outstretched palm, fleshless and hot as if dried up by fever, giving a bony pressure, expressive, seeming to say: "Between us there's no need of words."

The man had clear, wide-open eyes. Razumov fancied he could see a smile behind their sadness.

"This is Razumov," Sophia Antonovna repeated loudly for the benefit of the fat man, who at some distance displayed the profile of his stomach.

No one moved. Everything, sounds, attitudes, movements, and immobility seemed to be part of an experiment, the result of which was a thin voice piping with comic peevishness.

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"Oh, yes! Razumov. We have been hearing of nothing but Mr. Razumov for months. For my part I confess I would rather have seen Haldin on this spot instead of Mr. Razumov."

The squeaky stress put on the name "Razumov—Mr. Razumov" pierced the ear ridiculously like the falsetto of a circus clown beginning an elaborate joke. Astonishment was Razumov's first response, followed by sudden indignation.

"What's the meaning of this?" he asked in a stern tone.

"Tut. Silliness. He's always like that." Sophia Antonovna was obviously vexed. But she dropped the information, "Necator," from her lips just loud enough to be heard by Razumov. The abrupt squeaks of the fat man seemed to proceed from that thing like a balloon he carried under his overcoat. The stolidity of his attitude, the big feet, the lifeless, hanging hands, the enormous bloodless cheek, the thin wisps of hair straggling down the fat nape of the neck, fascinated Razumov into a stare on the verge of horror and laughter.

Nikita, surnamed Necator, with a sinister aptness of alliteration! Razumov had heard of him. He had heard so much since crossing the frontier of these celebrities of the militant revolution; the legends, the stories, the authentic chronicle, which now and then peeps out before a half-incredulous world. Razumov had heard of him. He was supposed to have killed more gendarmes and police agents than any revolutionist living. He had been entrusted with executions.

The paper with the letters N.N., the very pseudonym of murder, found pinned on the stabbed breast of a certain notorious spy (this picturesque detail of a sensational murder case had got into the newspapers), was the mark of his handiwork. "By order of the Committee.—N.N." A corner of the curtain lifted to strike the imagination of the gaping world. He was said to have been innumerable times in and out of Russia, the Necator of bureaucrats, of provincial governors, of obscure informers. He lived between whiles, Razumov had heard, on the shores of the Lake of Como, with a charming wife, devoted to the cause, and two young children. But how could that creature, so grotesque as to set town dogs barking at its mere sight, go about on those deadly errands and slip through the meshes of the police?

"What now, what now," the voice squeaked. "I am only sincere. It's not denied that the other was the leading spirit. Well, it would have been better if he had been the one spared to us. More useful. I am not a sentimentalist. Say what I think . . . only natural."

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Squeak, squeak, squeak, without a gesture, without a stir—the horrible squeaky burlesque of professional jealousy—this man of a sinister alliterative nickname, this executioner of revolutionary verdicts, the terrifying *N.N.* exasperated like a fashionable tenor by the attention attracted to the performance of an obscure amateur. Sophia Antonovna shrugged her shoulders. The comrade with the martial red moustache hurried towards Razumov full of conciliatory intentions in his strong buzzing voice.

"Devil take it. And in this place too, in the public street so to speak. But you can see yourself how it is. One of his fantastic sallies. Absolutely of no consequence."

"Pray don't concern yourself," cried Razumov going off into a long fit of laughter. "Don't mention it."

The other, his hectic flush like a pair of burns on his cheek bones, stared for a moment and burst out laughing too. Razumov, whose hilarity died out all at once, made a step forward.

"Enough of this," he began in a clear, incisive voice, though he could hardly control the trembling of his legs. "I will have no more of it. I shall not permit any one. . . . I can see very well what you are at with those allusions. . . . Inquire, investigate! I defy you, but I will not be played with."

He had spoken such words before. He had been driven to cry them out in the face of other suspicions. It was an infernal cycle bringing round that protest like a fatal necessity of his existence. But it was no use. He would be always played with. Luckily life does not last for ever.

"I won't have it," he shouted, striking his fist into the palm of his other hand.

"Kirylo Sidorovitch—what has come to you?" The woman revolutionist interfered with authority. They were all looking at Razumov now; the slayer of spies and gendarmes had turned about, presenting his enormous stomach in full, like a shield.

"Don't shout. There are people passing." Sophia Antonovna was apprehensive of another outburst. A steam-launch from Monrepos had come to the landing-stage opposite the gate, its hoarse whistle and the churning noise alongside all unnoticed, had landed a small bunch of local passengers who were dispersing their several ways. Only a specimen of early tourist in knickerbockers, conspicuous by a brand-new yellow leather glass-case, hung about for a moment, scenting something unusual about these four people within the rusty iron gates of what looked the grounds run wild of an unoccupied private

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house. Ah! If he had only known what the chance of commonplace travelling had suddenly put in his way! But he was a well-bred person; he averted his gaze and moved off with short steps along the avenue, on the watch for a tramcar.

A gesture from Sophia Antonovna, "Leave him to me," had sent the two men away—the buzzing of the inarticulate voice growing fainter and fainter, and the thin pipe of "What now, what's the matter?" reduced to the proportions of a squeaking toy by the distance. They had left him to her. So many things could be left safely to the experience of Sophia Antonovna. And at once, her black eyes turned to Razumov, her mind tried to get at the heart of that outburst. It had some meaning. No one is born an active revolutionist. The change comes disturbingly with the force of a sudden vocation bringing in its train agonising doubts, assertive violences, an unstable state of the soul, till the final appeasement of the convert in the perfect fierceness of conviction. She had seen—often had only divined—scores of these young men and young women going through an emotional crisis. This young man looked like a moody egotist. And besides it was a special—a unique case. There was something cautious in her warning speech.

"Take care, Razumov, my good friend. If you carry on like this you will go mad. You are angry with everybody and bitter with yourself and on the look-out for something to torment yourself with."

"It's intolerable!" Razumov could only speak in gasps. "You must admit that I can have no illusions on the attitude which . . . it isn't clear . . . or rather . . . only too clear."

He made a gesture of despair. It was not his courage that failed him. The choking fumes of falsehood had taken him by the throat—the thought of being condemned to struggle on and on in that tainted atmosphere without the hope of ever renewing his strength by a breath of fresh air.

"A glass of cold water is what you want." Sophia Antonovna glanced up the grounds at the house and shook her head, then out of the gate at the brimful placidity of the lake. With a half-comical shrug of the shoulders she gave the remedy up in the face of that abundance.

"It is you, my dear soul, who are flinging yourself at something which does not exist. What is it? Self-reproach, or what? It's absurd. You couldn't have gone and given yourself up because your comrade was taken."

She spoke reasonably, at some length too. Razumov had nothing to complain of in his reception. Every newcomer was

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discussed more or less. Everybody had to be thoroughly understood before being accepted. No one that she could remember had been shown from the first so much confidence. Soon, very soon, perhaps sooner than he expected, he would be given an opportunity of showing his devotion to the sacred task of crushing the Infamy.

Razumov, listening quietly, thought: "It may be that she is trying to lull my suspicions to sleep. On the other hand, it is obvious that most of them are fools." He moved aside a couple of paces and, folding his arms on his breast, leaned back against the stone pillar of the gate.

"As to what remains obscure in the fate of that poor Haldin," Sophia Antonovna dropped into a slowness of utterance which was to Razumov like the falling of molten lead drop by drop; "as to that—though no one ever hinted that either from fear or neglect your conduct has not been what it should have been—well, I have a bit of intelligence . . ."

Razumov could not prevent himself from raising his head, and Sophia Antonovna nodded slightly.

"I have. You remember that letter from Petersburg I mentioned to you a moment ago?"

"The letter? Perfectly. Some busybody has been reporting my conduct on a certain day. It's rather sickening. I suppose our police are greatly edified when they open these interesting and—and—superfluous letters."

"Oh dear no! The police do not get hold of our letters as easily as you imagine. The letter in question did not leave Petersburg till the ice broke up. It went by the first English steamer which left the Neva this spring. They have a fireman on board—one of us in fact. It has reached me from Hull . . ."

She paused as if she were surprised at the sullen fixity of Razumov's gaze, but went on at once, and much faster.

"We have some of our people there who . . . but never mind. The writer of the letter relates an incident which he thinks may possibly be connected with Haldin's arrest. I was just going to tell you when those two men came along."

"That also was an incident," muttered Razumov, "of a very charming kind—for me."

"Leave off that," cried Sophia Antonovna. "Nobody cares for Nikita's barking. There's no malice in him. Listen to what I have to say. You may be able to throw a light. There was in Petersburg a sort of town peasant—a man who

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owned horses. He came to town years ago to work for some relation as a driver and ended by owning a cab or two."

She might well have spared herself the slight effort of the gesture. "Wait!" Razumov did not mean to speak; he could not have interrupted her now, not to save his life. The contraction of his facial muscles had been involuntary, a mere surface stir leaving him sullenly attentive as before.

"He was not a quite ordinary man of his class—it seems," she went on. "The people of the house—my informant talked with many of them—you know, one of those enormous houses of shame and misery. . . ." Sophia Antonovna need not have enlarged on the character of the house. Razumov saw clearly, towering at her back, a dark mass of masonry veiled in snow-flakes, with the long row of windows of the eating-shop shining greasily very near the ground. The ghost of that night pursued him. He stood up to it with rage and with weariness.

"Did the late Haldin ever by chance speak to you of that house?" Sophia Antonovna was anxious to know.

"Yes." Razumov, making that answer, wondered whether he were falling into a trap. It was so humiliating to lie to these people that he probably could not have said no. "He mentioned to me once," he added, as if making an effort of memory, "a house of that sort. He used to visit some workmen there."

"Exactly."

Sophia Antonovna triumphed. Her correspondent had discovered that fact quite accidentally from the talk of the people of the house, having made friends with a workman who occupied a room there. They described Haldin's appearance perfectly. He brought comforting words of hope into their misery. He came irregularly, but he came very often, and—her correspondent wrote—sometimes he spent a night in the house, sleeping, they thought, in a stable which opened upon the inner yard.

"Note that, Razumov! In a stable."

Razumov had listened with a sort of ferocious but amused acquiescence.

"Yes. In the straw. It was probably the cleanest spot in the whole house."

"No doubt," assented the woman with that deep frown which seemed to draw closer together her black eyes in a sinister fashion. No four-footed beast could stand the filth and wretchedness so many human beings were condemned to suffer from in Russia. The point of this discovery was that it proved

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Haldin to have been familiar with that horse-owning peasant—a reckless, independent, free-living fellow not much liked by the other inhabitants of the house. He was believed to have been the associate of a band of housebreakers. Some of these got captured. Not while he was driving them, however; but still there was a suspicion against the fellow of having given a hint to the police and . . .

The woman revolutionist checked herself suddenly.

"And you? Have you ever heard your friend refer to a certain Ziemianitch?"

Razumov was ready for the name. He had been looking out for the question. "When it comes I shall own up," he had said to himself. But he took his time.

"To be sure!" he began slowly. "Ziemianitch, a peasant owning a team of horses. Yes. On one occasion. Ziemianitch! Certainly! Ziemianitch of the horses. . . . How could it have slipped my memory like this? One of the last conversations we had together."

"That means"—Sophia Antonovna looked very grave—"that means, Razumov, it was very shortly before—eh?"

"Before what?" shouted Razumov, advancing at the woman, who looked astonished but stood her ground. "Before—Oh! Of course, it was before! How could it have been after? Only a few hours before."

"And he spoke of him favourably?"

"With enthusiasm! The horses of Ziemianitch! The free soul of Ziemianitch."

Razumov took a savage delight in the loud utterance of that name, which had never before crossed his lips audibly. He fixed his blazing eyes on the woman till at last her fascinated expression recalled him to himself.

"The late Haldin," he said, holding himself in, with downcast eyes, "was inclined to take sudden fancies to people, on—on—what shall I say—insufficient grounds."

"There!" Sophia Antonovna clapped her hands. "That, to my mind, settles it. The suspicions of my correspondent were aroused. . . . ."

"Aha! Your correspondent," Razumov said in an almost openly mocking tone. "What suspicions? How aroused? By this Ziemianitch? Probably some drunken, gabbling, plausible. . . ."

"You talk as if you had known him."

Razumov looked up.

"No. But I knew Haldin."

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Sophia Antonovna nodded gravely.

"I see. Every word you say confirms to my mind the suspicion communicated to me in that very interesting letter. This Ziemianitch was found one morning hanging from a hook in the stable—dead."

Razumov felt a profound trouble. It was visible, because Sophia Antonovna was moved to observe vivaciously:

"Aha! You begin to see."

He saw it clearly enough—in the light of a lantern casting spokes of shadow in a cellar-like stable, the body in a sheepskin coat and long boots hanging against the wall. A pointed hood, with the ends wound about up to the eyes, hid the face. "But that does not concern me," he reflected. "It does not affect my position at all. He never knew who had thrashed him. He could not have known." Razumov felt sorry for the old lover of the bottle and women.

"Yes. Some of them end like that," he muttered. "What is your idea, Sophia Antonovna?"

It was the idea of her correspondent. Sophia Antonovna had adopted it fully. She stated it in one word—"Remorse." Razumov opened his eyes very wide at that. Sophia Antonovna's informant, by listening to the talk of the house, by putting this and that together, had managed to come very near to the truth of Haldin's relation to Ziemianitch.

"It is I who can tell you what you were not certain of—that your friend had some plan for saving himself afterwards, for getting out of Petersburg, at any rate. Perhaps that and no more, trusting to luck for the rest. And that fellow's horses were part of the plan."

"They have actually got at the truth," Razumov marvelled to himself, while he nodded judicially. "Yes, that's possible, very possible." But the woman revolutionist was very positive that it was so. First of all a conversation about horses between Haldin and Ziemianitch had been partly overheard. Then there were the suspicions of the people in the house when their "young gentleman" (they did not know Haldin by his name) ceased to call at the house. Some of them used to charge Ziemianitch with knowing something of this absence. He denied it with exasperation; but the fact was that ever since Haldin's disappearance he was not himself, growing moody and thin. Finally, during a quarrel with some woman (to whom he was making up) in which most of the inmates of the house took part apparently, he was openly abused by his chief enemy, an athletic pedlar, for an informer, and for

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having driven " our young gentleman to Siberia, the same as you did those young fellows who broke into houses." In consequence of this there was a fight, and Ziemianitch got flung down a flight of stairs. Thereupon he drank and moped for a week and then hanged himself.

Sophia Antonovna drew her conclusions from the tale. She charged Ziemianitch either with drunken indiscretion as to a driving job on a certain date, overheard by some spy in some low grog-shop—perhaps in the very eating-shop on the ground floor of the house—or, maybe, a downright denunciation, followed by remorse. A man like that would be capable of anything. People said he was a flighty old chap. And if he had been once before mixed up with the police—as seemed certain, though he always denied it—in connection with these thieves, he would be sure to be acquainted with some police underlings, always on the look-out for something to report. Possibly at first his tale was not made anything of till the day that scoundrel de P—— got his deserts. Ah! But then every bit and scrap of hint and information would be acted on, and fatally they were bound to get Haldin.

Sophia Antonovna spread out her hands—" Fatally."

Fatality—chance! Razumov meditated in silent astonishment upon the queer verisimilitude of these inferences. They were obviously to his advantage.

" It is right now to make this conclusive evidence known generally." Sophia Antonovna was very calm and deliberate again. She had received the letter three days ago, but did not write at once to Peter Ivanovitch. She knew then that she would have the opportunity presently of meeting several men of action assembled for an important purpose.

" I thought it would be more effective if I could show the letter itself at large. I have it in my pocket now. You understand how pleased I was to come upon you."

Razumov was saying to himself: " She won't offer to show the letter to me. Not likely. Has she told me everything that correspondent of hers has found out?" He longed to see the letter, but he felt he must not ask.

" Tell me, please, was this an investigation ordered, as it were?"

" No, no," she protested. " There you are again with your sensitiveness. It makes you stupid. Don't you see there was no starting-point for an investigation even if anyone had thought of it. A perfect blank! That's exactly what some people were pointing out as the reason for receiving you

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cautiously. It was all perfectly accidental, arising from my informant striking an acquaintance with an intelligent skin-dresser lodging in that particular slum-house. A wonderful coincidence!"

"A pious person," suggested Razumov, with a pale smile, "would say that the hand of God has done it all."

"My poor father would have said that." Sophia Antonovna did not smile. She dropped her eyes. "Not that his God ever helped him. It's a long time since God has done anything for the people. Anyway, it's done."

"All this would be quite final," said Razumov, with every appearance of reflective impartiality, "if there was any certitude that the 'our young gentleman' of these people was Victor Haldin. Have we got that?"

"Yes. There's no mistake. My correspondent was as familiar with Haldin's personal appearance as with your own," the woman affirmed decisively.

"It's the red-nosed fellow beyond a doubt," Razumov said to himself with reawakened uneasiness. Had his own visit to that accursed house passed unnoticed? It was barely possible. Yet it was hardly probable. It was just the right sort of food for the popular gossip that gaunt busybody had been picking up. But the letter did not seem to contain any allusion to that. Unless she had suppressed it. And, if so, why? If it had really escaped the prying of that hunger-stricken democrat with a confounded genius for recognising people from description, it could only be for a time. He would come upon it presently and hasten to write another letter—and then!

For all the envenomed recklessness of his temper, fed on hate and disdain, Razumov shuddered inwardly. It guarded him from common fear, but it could not defend him from disgust at being dealt with in any way by these people. It was a sort of superstitious dread. Now, since his position had been made more secure by their own folly at the cost of Ziemianitch, he felt the need of perfect safety, with its freedom from direct lying, with its power of moving amongst them silent, unquestioning, listening, impenetrable, like the very fate of their crimes and their folly. Was this advantage his already? Or not yet? Or never would be?

"Well, Sophia Antonovna," his air of reluctant concession was genuine in so far that he was really loath to part with her without testing her sincerity by a question it was impossible to bring about in any way; "well, Sophia Antonovna, if that is so, then——"

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"The creature has done justice to himself," the woman observed, as if thinking aloud.

"What? Ah, yes! Remorse," Razumov muttered, with equivocal contempt.

"Don't be harsh, Kirylo Sidorovitch, if you have lost a friend." There was no hint of softness in her tone, only the black glitter of her eyes seemed detached for an instant from vengeful visions. "He was a man of the people. The simple Russian soul is never wholly impenitent. It's something to know that."

"Consoling?" insinuated Razumov in a tone of inquiry.

"Don't rail," she checked him sharply. "Remember, Razumov, that women, children, and revolutionists hate irony, which is the negation of all saving instincts, of all faith, of all devotion, of all action. Don't rail! Don't. . . . I don't know how it is, but there are moments when you are abhorrent to me. . . ."

She averted her face. A languid silence, as if all the electricity of the situation had been discharged in this flash of passion, lasted for some time. Razumov had not flinched. Suddenly she laid the tips of her fingers on his sleeve.

"Don't mind."

"I don't mind," he said very quietly.

He was proud to feel that she could read nothing on his face. He was really mollified, relieved, if only for a moment, from an obscure oppression. And suddenly he asked himself: "Why the devil did I go to that house? It was an imbecile thing to do."

A profound disgust came over him. Sophia Antonovna lingered talking in a friendly manner with an evident conciliatory intention. And it was still about the famous letter, referring to various minute details given by her informant, who had never seen Ziemianitch. The "victim of remorse" had been buried several weeks before her correspondent beg an frequenting the house. It—the house—contained very good revolutionary material. The spirit of the heroic Haldin had passed through these dens of black wretchedness with a promise of universal redemption from all the miseries that oppress mankind. Ruzumov listened without hearing, gnawed by the newborn desire of safety with its independence from that degrading method of direct lying which at times he found it almost impossible to practise.

No. The point he wanted to hear about could never come into this conversation. There was no way of bringing it forward.

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He regretted not having composed a perfect story for use abroad, in which his fatal connection with the house might have been owned up to. But when he left Russia he did not know that Ziemianitch had hanged himself. And, anyway, who could have foreseen this woman's "informant" stumbling upon that particular slum, of all the slums awaiting destruction in the purifying flame of social revolution? Who could have foreseen? Nobody! "It's a perfect, diabolic surprise," thought Razumov, calm-faced in his attitude of inscrutable superiority, nodding assent to Sophia Antonovna's remarks upon the psychology of "the people," "Oh, yes—certainly," rather coldly, but with a nervous longing in his fingers to tear some sort of confession out of her throat.

Then, at the very last, on the point of separating, the feeling of relaxed tension already upon him, he heard Sophia Antonovna allude to the subject of his uneasiness. How it came about he could only guess, his mind being absent at the moment, but it must have sprung from Sophia Antonovna's complaints of the illogical absurdity of the people. For instance—that Ziemianitch was notoriously irreligious and yet in the last weeks of his life he suffered from the notion that he had been beaten by the devil.

"The devil," repeated Razumov, as though he had not heard aright.

"The actual devil. The devil in person. You may well look astonished, Kirylo Sidorovitch. Early on the very night poor Haldin was taken, a complete stranger turned up and gave Ziemianitch a most fearful thrashing while he was lying dead-drunk in the stable. The wretched creature's body was one mass of bruises. He showed them to the people in the house."

"But you, Sophia Antonovna, you don't believe in the actual devil?"

"Do you?" retorted the woman curtly. "Not but that there are plenty of men worse than devils to make a hell of this earth," she muttered to herself.

Razumov watched her, vigorous and white-haired, with the deep fold between her thin eyebrows, and her black glance turned idly away. It was obvious that she did not make much of the story—unless indeed this was the perfection of duplicity. "A dark young man," she explained further. "Never seen there before, never seen afterwards. Why are you smiling, Razumov?"

"At the devil being still young after all these ages," he answered composedly. "But who was able to describe

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him, since the victim, you say, was dead-drunk at the time ? "

" Oh ! The eating-house keeper has described him. An overbearing, swarthy young man in a student's cloak, who came rushing in, demanded Ziemianitch, beat him furiously and rushed away without a word, leaving the eating-house keeper paralysed with astonishment."

" Does he, too, believe it was the devil ? "

" That I can't say. I am told he's very reserved on the matter. Those sellers of spirits are great scoundrels generally. I should think he knows more of it than anybody."

" Well, and you, Sophia Antonovna, what's your theory ? " asked Razumov in a tone of great interest. " Yours and your informant's, who is on the spot."

" I agree with him. Some police-hound in disguise. Who else could beat a helpless man so unmercifully ? As for the rest, if they were out that day on every trail old and new it is probable enough that they might have thought it just as well to have Ziemianitch at hand for more information or for identification or what not. Some scoundrelly detective was sent to fetch him along, and being vexed at finding him so drunk broke a stable fork over his ribs. Later on, after they had the big game safe in the net, they troubled their heads no more about that peasant."

Such were the last words of the woman revolutionist in this conversation, keeping so close to the truth, departing from it so far in the verisimilitude of thoughts and conclusions as to give one the notion of the invincible nature of human error, a glimpse into the utmost depths of self-deception. Razumov, after shaking hands with Sophia Antonovna, left the grounds, crossed the road, and walking out on the little steamboat pier leaned over the rail.

His mind was at ease ; ease such as he had not known for many days, ever since that night . . . the night. The conversation with the woman revolutionist had given him the view of his danger at the very moment this danger vanished, characteristically enough. " I ought to have foreseen the doubts that would arise in those people's minds," he thought. Then his attention being attracted by a stone of peculiar shape which he could see clearly lying at the bottom, he began to speculate as to the depth of water in that spot. But very soon, with a start of wonder at this extraordinary instance of ill-timed detachment, he returned to his train of thought. " I ought to have told very circumstantial lies from the first," he said to

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himself with a mortal distaste of the mere idea which silenced his mental utterance for quite a perceptible interval. "Luckily that's all right now," he reflected, and after a time spoke to himself half aloud, "Thanks to the devil," and laughed a little.

The end of Ziemianitch then arrested his wandering thoughts. He was not exactly amused at the interpretation, but he could not help detecting in it a certain piquancy. He owned to himself that, had he known of that suicide before leaving Russia, he would have been incapable of making such excellent use of it for his own purposes. He ought to be infinitely obliged to the fellow with the red nose for his patience and ingenuity, "A wonderful psychologist apparently," he said to himself sarcastically. Remorse indeed! It was a striking example of your true conspirator's blindness, of the stupid subtlety of people with one idea. This was a drama of love, not of conscience, Razumov continued to himself, mockingly. A woman the old fellow was making up to! A robust pedlar, clearly a rival, throwing him down a flight of stairs. . . . And at sixty, for a life-long lover, it was not an easy matter to get over. That was a feminist of a different stamp from Peter Ivanovitch. Even the comfort of the bottle might conceivably fail him in this supreme crisis. At such an age nothing but a halter could cure the pangs of an unquenchable passion. And besides there was the wild exasperation aroused by the unjust aspersions and the contumely of the house, with the maddening impossibility to account for that mysterious thrashing added to these simple and bitter sorrows. "Devil, eh?" Razumov exclaimed with mental excitement as if he had made an interesting discovery. "Ziemianitch ended by falling into mysticism. So many of our true Russian souls end in that way! Very characteristic." He felt pity for Ziemianitch, a large neutral pity, such as one may feel for an unconscious multitude, a great people seen from above—like a community of crawling ants working out its destiny. It was as if this Ziemianitch could not possibly have done anything else. And Sophia Antonovna's cocksure and contemptuous "some police-hound" was characteristically Russian in another way. But there was no tragedy there. This was a comedy of errors. It was as if the devil himself were playing a game with all of them in turn. First with him, then with Ziemianitch, then with those revolutionists. The devil's own game this. . . . He interrupted his earnest mental soliloquy with a jocular thought at his own expense. "Hallo! I am falling into mysticism too."

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His mind was more at ease than ever. Turning about he put his back against the rail comfortably. "All this fits with marvellous aptness," he continued to think. "The brilliance of my reputed exploit is no longer darkened by the fate of my supposed colleague. The mystic Ziemianitch accounts for that. An incredible chance has served me. No more need of lies. I shall have only to listen and to keep my scorn from getting the upper hand of my caution."

He sighed, folded his arms, his chin dropped on his breast, and it was a long time before he started forward from that pose with the recollection that he had made up his mind to do something important that day. What it was he could not immediately recall, yet he made no effort of memory, for he was uneasily certain that he would remember presently.

He had not gone more than a hundred yards towards the town when he slowed down, almost faltered in his walk, at the sight of a figure walking in the contrary direction, draped in a cloak under a soft, broad-brimmed hat, picturesque but diminutive, as if seen through the big end of an opera-glass. It was impossible to avoid that tiny man, for there was no issue for retreat.

"Another one going to that mysterious meeting," thought Razumov. He was right in his surmise, only *this* one, unlike the others who came from a distance, was known to him personally. Still, he hoped to pass on with a mere bow, but it was impossible to ignore the little thin hand with hairy wrist and knuckles protruded in a friendly wave from under the folds of the cloak, worn Spanish-wise, in disregard of a fairly warm day, a corner flung over the shoulder.

"And how is Herr Razumov?" sounded the greeting in German, by that alone made more odious to the object of the affable recognition. At closer quarters the diminutive personage looked like a reduction of an ordinary-sized man, with a lofty brow bared for a moment by the raising of the hat, the great pepper-and-salt full beard spread over the proportionally broad chest. A fine bold nose jutted over a thin mouth hidden in the mass of fine hair. All this, accented features, strong limbs in their relative smallness, appeared delicate without the slightest sign of debility. The eyes alone, almond-shaped and brown, were too big, and as if misty, with the whites slightly bloodshot by much pen labour under a lamp. The obscure celebrity of the tiny man was well known to Razumov. Polyglot, of unknown parentage, of indefinite nationality, anarchist, with a pedantic and ferocious temperament and an amazingly

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inflammatory capacity for invective, he was a power in the background, this violent pamphleteer, clamouring for revolutionary justice, this Julius Laspara, editor of the *Living Word*, confidant of conspirators, inditer of sanguinary menaces and manifestos, suspected of being in the secret of every plot. Laspara lived in the old town in a sombre, narrow house left him by a naïve middle-class admirer of his humanitarian eloquence. With him lived his two daughters, who overtopped him head and shoulders, and a pasty-faced, lean boy of six, languishing in the dark rooms in blue cotton overalls and clumsy boots, might have belonged to either one of them or to neither. No stranger could tell. Julius Laspara no doubt knew which of his girls it was who, after casually vanishing for a few years, had as casually returned to him possessed of that child; but, with admirable pedantry, he had refrained from asking her for details—no, not so much as the name of the father, because maternity should be an anarchist function. Razumov had been admitted twice to that suite of several small dark rooms on the top floor, dusty window-panes, litter of all sorts of sweepings all over the place, half-full glasses of tea forgotten on every table, the two Laspara daughters prowling about enigmatically silent, misty-eyed like the father, corsetless, and generally in their want of shape and the disorder of their rumpled attire resembling old dolls; the great but obscure Julius, his feet twisted round his three-legged stool, always ready to receive the visitors, the pen instantly dropped, the body screwed round with a striking display of the lofty brow and of the great austere beard. When he got down from his stool it was as though he had descended from the heights of Olympus. He was dwarfed by his daughters, by the furniture, by any caller of ordinary stature. But he very seldom left it, and still more rarely was seen walking in broad daylight.

It must have been some matter of serious importance which had driven him out in that direction that afternoon. Evidently he wished to be amiable to that young man whose arrival had made some sensation in the world of political refugees. In Russian now, which he spoke as he spoke and wrote in four or five other European languages, without distinction and without force (other than that of invective), he inquired if Razumov had taken his inscriptions at the University as yet. And the young man, shaking his head negatively:

"There's plenty of time for that. But meantime are you not going to write something for us?"

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He could not understand how anyone could refrain from writing on anything, social, economic, historical—anything. Any subject could be treated in the right spirit, and for the ends of social revolution. And, as it happened, a friend of his in London had got in touch with a review of advanced ideas. "We must educate, educate everybody—develop the great thought of absolute liberty and of revolutionary justice."

Razumov muttered rather surlily that he did not even know English.

"Write in Russian. We'll have it translated. There can be no difficulty. Why, without seeking further, there is Miss Haldin. My daughters go to see her sometimes. You know the sister." He nodded significantly. "She does nothing, has never done anything in her life. She would be quite competent with a little assistance. Only write. You know you must. And so good-bye for the present."

He raised his arm and went on. Razumov backed against the low wall, looked after him, spat violently, and went on his way with an angry mutter:

"Cursed Jew!"

He did not know anything about it. Julius Laspara might have been a Transylvanian, a Turk, an Andalusian, or a citizen of one of the Hanse towns for anything he could tell to the contrary. But this is not a story of the West, and this exclamation must be recorded accompanied by the comment that it was merely an expression of hate and contempt, best adapted to the nature of the feelings Razumov suffered from at the time. He was boiling with rage, as though he had been grossly insulted. He walked as if blind, following instinctively the shore of the diminutive harbour along the quay, through a pretty dull garden, where dull people sat on chairs under the trees, till, his fury abandoning him, he discovered himself in the middle of a long, broad bridge. He slowed down at once. To his right, beyond the toy-like jetties, he saw the green slopes framing the Petit Lac in all the marvellous banality of the picturesque made of painted cardboard, with the more distant stretch of water inanimate and shining like a piece of tin.

He turned his head away from that view for the tourists and walked on slowly, his eyes fixed on the ground. One or two persons had to get out of his way, and then turned round to give a surprised stare to his profound absorption. The insistence of the celebrated subversive journalist rankled in his mind strangely. Write. Must write! He! Write! A sudden

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light flashed upon him. To write was the very thing he had made up his mind to do that day. He had made up his mind irrevocably to that step and then had forgotten all about it. That incorrigible tendency to escape from the grip of the situation was fraught with serious danger. He was ready to despise himself for it. What was it? Levity, or deep-seated weakness? Or an unconscious dread?

"Is it that I am shrinking? It can't be! It's impossible. To shrink now would be worse than moral suicide; it would be nothing less than moral damnation," he thought. "Is it possible that I have a conventional conscience?"

He rejected that hypothesis with scorn, and, checked on the edge of the pavement, made ready to cross the road and proceed up the wide street facing the head of the bridge; and that for no other reason except that it was there before him. But at the moment a couple of carriages and a slow-moving cart interposed, and suddenly he turned sharp to the left, following the quay again, but now away from the lake.

"It may be just my health," he thought, allowing himself a very unusual doubt of his soundness; for, with the exception of a childish ailment or two, he had never been ill in his life. But that was a danger, too. Only it seemed as though he were being looked after in a specially remarkable way. "If I believed in an active Providence," Razumov said to himself, amused grimly, "I would see here the working of an ironical finger. To have a Julius Laspara put in my way as if expressly to remind me of my purpose is—— Write, he had said. I must write—I must, indeed! I shall write—never fear. Certainly. That's why I am here. And for the future I shall have something to write about."

He was exciting himself by this mental soliloquy. But the idea of writing evoked the thought of a place to write in, of shelter, of privacy, and naturally of his lodgings, mingled with a distaste for the necessary exertion of getting there, with a mistrust as of some hostile influence awaiting him within those odious four walls.

"Suppose one of these revolutionists," he asked himself, "were to take a fancy to call on me while I am writing?" The mere prospect of such an interruption made him shudder. One could lock one's door, or ask the tobacconist downstairs (some sort of a refugee himself) to tell inquirers that one was not in. Not very good precautions those. The manner of his life, he felt, must be kept clear of every cause for suspicion or even occasion for wonder, down to such trifling occurrences as

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a delay in opening a locked door. "I wish I were in the middle of some field miles away from everywhere," he thought.

He had unconsciously turned to the left once more and now was aware of being on a bridge again. This one was much narrower than the other, and instead of being straight, made a sort of elbow or angle. At the point of that angle a short arm joined it to a hexagonal islet with a soil of gravel and its shores faced with dressed stone, a perfection of puerile neatness. A couple of tall poplars and a few other trees stood grouped on the clean dark gravel, and under them a few garden benches and a bronze effigy of Jean Jacques Rousseau seated on its pedestal.

On setting his foot on it Razumov became aware that, except for the woman in charge of the refreshment châlet, there was no one on the island. There was something of naïve, odious, and inane simplicity about that unfrequented tiny crumb of earth named after Jean Jacques Rousseau. Something pretentious and shabby, too. He asked for a glass of milk, which he drank standing at one draught (nothing but tea had passed his lips since the morning), and was going away with a weary, lagging step when a thought stopped him short. He had found precisely what he needed. If solitude could ever be secured in the open air in the middle of a town, he would have it there on this absurd island, together with the faculty of watching the only approach.

He went back heavily to a garden seat, dropped into it. This was the place for making a beginning of that writing which had to be done. The materials he had on him. "I shall always come here," he said to himself, and afterwards sat for quite a long time motionless, without thought and sight and hearing, almost without life. He sat long enough for the declining sun to dip behind the roofs of the town at his back, and throw the shadow of the houses on the lake front over the islet, before he pulled out of his pocket a fountain pen, opened a small notebook on his knee, and began to write quickly, raising his eyes now and then at the connecting arm of the bridge. These glances were needless; the people crossing over in the distance seemed unwilling even to look at the islet where the exiled effigy of the author of the *Social Contract* towered above the bowed head of Razumov in the sombre immobility of bronze. After finishing his scribbling, Razumov with a sort of feverish haste put away the pen, then rammed the notebook into his pocket, first tearing out the written pages with an almost convulsive brusqueness. But the folding of the flimsy

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batch on his knee was executed with thoughtful nicety. That done, he leaned back in his seat and remained motionless with the papers crushed in his left hand. The twilight had deepened. He got up and began to pace to and fro slowly under the trees.

"There can be no doubt that now I am safe," he thought. His fine ear could detect the faintly accentuated murmurs of the current breaking against the point of the island, and he forgot himself in listening to them with interest. But even to his acute sense of hearing the sound was too elusive.

"Extraordinary occupation I am giving myself up to," he murmured. And it occurred to him that this was about the only sound he could listen to innocently, and for his own pleasure as it were. Yes, the sound of water, the voice of the wind—completely foreign to human passions. All the other sounds of this earth brought contamination to the solitude of a soul.

This was Mr. Razumov's feeling, the soul, of course, being his own, and the word being used not in the theological sense, but standing, as far as I can understand it, for that part of Mr. Razumov which was not his body and more specially in danger from the fires of this earth. It is well known that the way of salvation is hard, darkened by the shades of error and made lonely to an independent traveller. Even they who travel in guided troops and organised caravans are not spared the terrors of isolation. And it must be admitted that in Mr. Razumov's case the bitterness of solitude from which he suffered was not an altogether morbid phenomenon.

(*To be continued*)

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The Dew of the Morning

By Eden Phillpotts

Earth was dew-pearled at early day, and low vapours still swept the soaking heath. Breast-high they came in faint fingers of fog, and then they curled and writhed away at the breath of morning breezes. Above hung an opaline and universal haze, but the sun, ascending, began to sift light through it and break it and set it glowing in patches and zones of silver. The heights answered this illumination; the herbage glittered, and the fern, stealing from the mist, revealed in every frond an acknowledgment that the prime of the year was past. Many individual signs had long since appeared, and here an elm flashed its signal fire from the green, and here wild clematis already powdered the wood edge or cliff face with its grey down; but now the pending change brooded everywhere, and Autumn, sweeping on starry nights by weald and moor, had touched all things with the hem of her garment and sprinkled the splendours of her passing over the whole earth. And the dawns grew redder, and the sunsets, too. Now this universal change might be distinguished, despite a delicate, visible air that robbed the earth of colour behind its own translucent and diaphonous gauzes.

Nothing was red or brown, save to the knowledge of the mind. The vague and nameless hue of the atmosphere, when Eurus blows, swept hill and valley, knap and coomb, while aloft there persisted sufficient fog to hide the tor-tops and sweep the laps of the river-glens with cloud. The great spaces of the fern were tinged to a genial tawny, like the pelt of the brown bear. Its summer green, full of reflected sky, was gone; its lustre had departed; only here and there through the level tones of russet a flash of lemon light broke the dominant colour. The heath had turned grey, though a little purple still melted into it where shone the final flowers; but the herbage was a triumphant green, for one stood on the finest grazing-grounds in England, and legions of sheep and many a warren of coneys kept the grass short and close, so that no dead flower-stalks shed a pallor upon it.

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Colour values continued dim and doubtful while the day waxed, and it was only where some chance shaft fell from the southing sun and found a clear pathway to the earth that stark colour flashed, like a jewel, through the mist and leapt out of the wilderness with a radiant revelation of green and grey and auburn. The flash of the water-springs, the glow of sphagna, the warm gold of the lesser furze, all gleamed together, unreal and fleeting as a mirage, upon the heart of the wilderness.

At noon great brightness broke upon a distant hill, and spread and flowed, as though some mighty vessel of light had been shattered there and the contents let loose to flood the mountain. It revealed the magic of mid-September, penetrating all living things; it spoke of the changes imminent, of the pictures to be painted in a night by Autumn's stealthy brushes. One may thus mark a forest of trees dimmed at a stroke and lifted from its sulky vigour of dead green to a pallor and mellowness, where the beginnings of the death-light spread through the veins of every leaf, to run together presently in a fire of far-flung glory, and light the pyres of the fall. At present the tentative touch was so delicate that it demanded close seeing. Like a colour ghost it haunted the glen and dingle, flitted over the wild places, stole by stream side, chilled to whiteness the etiolate leaves of the underwood.

Dim horizons stretched every way from my standpoint, and now a fine thing happened, for temporary darkness obscured the zenith, while beneath it, where roved the high-climbing hills, a pure and silver light filtered down and misted on their broken undulations. Thus the gloom above and the rufous fern and jagged stone immediately beneath, darkened by the great shadow over them, made a frame for the distance, and by contrast of their sobriety above and below increased the splendour of the morning, that floated between, till it shone unearthly, like a glimpse of fairyland, or the blessing of some brief, happy dream breaking a night of pain. Against the rough granite and scrawled fern, and beneath the frown of gathered cloud, earth trembled in a lustre of pure light, smiled with enchantment of pale pearl and grey and azure, and so persisted for a few great moments until the upper sky cleared again and the frame of the picture brightened and melted into its familiar relation with the middle distance and horizon.

From the heights I descended presently where low willows grew about a little river. So close their round heads bent over

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it that one only marked the water's progress by a murmur; but anon it flashed forth into a pool and foamed over a little fall. Following the cincture of the sallows ran a path, and here, breaking out of the growing things, as it seemed, and autumn-stained with the same colours as the unconscious wilderness around him, there came earth moulded like myself. A tall, old man limped towards me on a stick. He went lame, and his back was round, but humour and some intelligence marked his face, and though he had but one eye, a permanent expression of cheerfulness sat upon him, and a smile homed at the corners of his big, easy mouth. His whiskers were large and grey, the rest of his ripe and wrinkled countenance clean-shaven. He wore an old deer-stalker, sunk to dingy green by exposure, and his clothes were also reduced to nondescript hues, that hid him against his background and reminded one of the protective colouring of some insects and animals.

"Sarvent, sir!" he said, words that set back time by twenty years, for the folk no longer salute strangers so.

"Morning, master. Looks like a fine fall after the wet summer."

"So it do, then; and birds so strong as ever I seed 'em. Flushed a brave cock yonder. Got up like a lion a did!"

"Well done you! Too early for a drink?"

He sighed with satisfaction, not so much at the offer of my flask as at the sound of his own voice.

"I'll pitch 'pon thicky stone and have a tell," he said. "As to whisky, I never touch it except off and on—as it might be now. God's my judge, I gived half my last bottle to a sick horse. But this be beautiful, sure enough, and goeth very suent. Here's health to your honour and good sport—if you'm a sportsman. I be a gamekeeper—or I should say 'I was,' for I've dropped out now. Seventy-three, and lame along of lying in wet hedges by night waiting for they baggering poachers. Ban't for me to say nothing about my shooting to you, though I was accounted a pretty good shotsman. But game—there, 'tis born in a man, the power of breeding game. You have it, or you have it not. Them spinneys up over, running acrost the goyle, was planted by a wise man fifty-five year ago; and 'twasn't a fool helped to put the trees in their places, though I sez it. A young youth I was in them days, and they larches, so straight and beautiful as they be—hundreds of dozens of 'em—was put in by this hand, and their dinky roots spread out tender afore us heaped in the earth. Same with t'other trees—beech and holly and rhodo-

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dendrums—purty cover, though it don't hold the birds I remember; and not the fish I remember in this here water. What with hotters and herons 'tis no fun to be born a trout. And then they baggering moorhens eats the spawn—God's my judge they do. Many have I shot—many and many—and herons likewise; but when it comes to hotters, a gamekeeper do tread on tender ground. But there 'tis—one of the pities of life—that keepers and huntsmen can't live together in peace and harmony. For why? 'Cause hotters and salmon can't, and foxes and pheasants can't. But where foxes be the matter—well, 'tis a damn delicate subject, and I always say 'tis better a gamekeeper don't let his right hand know what his left hand doeth."

He stopped for breath and laughed.

"Tell me about your shooting," I said. "You've lost an eye—a bit of bad luck, I expect?"

"So 'twas, then—proper bad luck, sure enough, and yet, under Providence, you might say, good luck that 'twas no worse. I was out wi' my master's two boys—years and years agone, of course, for the one as took my eye died in the wars, and t'other's squire this minute, though he was the younger son. A terrible high-spirited, rash chap—him as shot me and got shot himself by they Boers, poor fellow. We was out one day rabbit shooting, and bang he goeth acrost my face! And I felt a terrible bitter pang in my eye, and clapped my hand to un, but 'twas too late to save un. There 'twas—my poor eye—all running down my cheek like a poached hegg! A terrible sad loss to me to be sure, but t'other have stood to work very well, and I don't much miss the one that went. It took me a good bit to larn to shoot straight, however, but I mastered it. A shotsman have to keep a lot of odd knowledge ready for call at the instant moment 'tis wanted. 'Tis second nature to me. A snipe do slew upon the air cruel, yet I've cut down scores o' dozens. They tell me as driven grouse be the hardest things under heaven to stop, but I've never seed 'em, and I don't believe it. When they migrating birds fust come to Dartymoor, they'm that wing-weary that I've seen 'em just lop along in front of me, like an ould owl. I mind once going out for the house to shoot a woodcock, and God's my judge, but owing to the wintertime and the terrible cold weather I took a drop over and above afore I went. So there 'twas—if I didn't find myself a bit drunky when the cold struck me. Nought to name, as I thought, but I knowed my liquor was above and not below, and my spaniel

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dog knowed it, and when master cock got up—so close that I could see the black eyes staring out o' the head of un—he knowed it, tu, for I missed! 'Tis solemn truth—I didn't so much as tickle his tail; and then I knowed I was more than just bosky-eyed, but properly, beastly drunk. I seed woodcock settle again, and then I settled also and took out my pipe and had a pull at un, and let the drink lift up off my intellects. Which it did do; and then I sent the dog forward and flushed the bird again, and when he dashed off I cut un down as right as rain. Us have a pigeon shoot sometimes also, and I shot for an ould ram sheep once, and lost un against Samuel Bassett, him as keeps the 'Plume' to Widecombe. He didn't want the ram, but I did, and so I bought un and took un home. 'Hast winned the ram?' cries my wife. 'Ess, here her be in the cart, but 'twas a terrible hard job,' I says, 'and I only got her with silver shot.' Old woman was properly mazed to hear such a word. 'Silver shot!' she says. 'I never heard tell of such a thing.' And my son—him over at Squire Blackall's now—he said he hadn't heard of silver shot, neither. And then I told 'em, and us laughed so as you could have heard us 'pon top of Hameldown very near!"

"A very good joke, sure enough."

"So 'twas, then, but I know a better. Did I ever tell your honour about the flood? No, I lay I never did, because I never met 'e afore. 'Twas when I was a young man and lived down close by the river; and one night, hearing a terrible strange row, I lit my cannel and put on my trousers and went down-house. And there was the river in my kitchen! God's my judge, but 'twas there! Two o'clock of an October night, and raining like Noah's flood. A proper come-along-of-it, I warn 'e! I got my wife out of the house, and carried my two childer along with her to a neighbour; and then I heard my pig hollering—a beast he was as weighed eight or nine score, and had come to be very near ready for killing. A terrible brave screechin' the poor creature made, and when I got down to the lew house, there 'twas swimming for dear life, and yowling louder than the noise of the flood. So glad to see me as a Christian, I'm sure. So I put a rope round the belly of un and haled un off. But he never fatted no more; the fright had fastened on his innards, and he wouldn't eat his meat proper, and made but second-class pork. But the best of the fun happened next day, because my neighbour, a carpenter, was so deaf as a adder. And he'd slept through the hours of darkness as usual, little knowing that the river was

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up and playing the mischief with his shop and kitchen. And when he went down in the morning he seed the place upside down, and rushed over to me hollerin' like a good un. 'Oh, my word!' he says; 'the Dowl's been in my shop—he's been there his very own self and played hell with my goods!' Then us told him about the flood, and he couldn't credit it for a brave while. Dirt! You never see such dirt. The settlement was inches deep on everything, and it took us poor souls a month of Sundays and barrels and barrels o' sweet water to get our places proper again. A wild, rebellious job, sure enough!"

And so he talked till it was noon.

"Must be gwaine on? Well, so must I—an' terrible pleased to meet your honour, I'm sure; for these times, now I be on the shelf, 'tis a fine thing for an old man to hear a strange voice. And I always tried to give the gen'lemen good sport, and never heard tell that none grumbled much against me."

I left him, and carried away the treasure of his rotund and jolly voice.

He came as a genial presence proper to the hour—an emanation and embodiment of the garnering time, a Dionysian spirit of ripeness with the smell of cider-vats and autumnal woods upon his vesture and hot blood still running in his old veins. It seemed, indeed, that he was not old. I found it hard to remember that the adult larches, standing stoutly in their companies upon the hither hill, had been set in the earth by living fingers—that their infant roots were spread out tenderly by a planter who had not himself yet sunk underground.

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The Spectator: a Reply

THOMAS HARDY
BERNARD SHAW
FREDERIC HARRISON
CONRAD
HENRY JAMES
H. G. WELLS
R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM
FRANCIS THOMPSON
ROBERT BRIDGES
SWINBURNE
WILLIAM WATSON
YEATS
ARNOLD BENNETT
JOHN GALSWORTHY
TOLSTOI
GORKI
ANATOLE FRANCE
WAGNER
TCHEKOFF
PAUL BOURGET
MAURICE HEWLETT
LAURENCE BINYON
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Leonard Hobhouse
Edmund Gosse
A. C. Benson
I. Zangwill
Herbert Trench
Hilaire Belloc
Violet Hunt
Ethel Clifford
Mrs. W. K. Clifford
John Masefield
May Sinclair
Sidney Low
A. Neil Lyons
Richard Whiteing
Ford Maddox Hueffer
Wilfred Scawen Blunt
Stephen Phillips
William H. Davies
Vernon Lee
C. F. Keary
Gilbert Cannan
Maurice Baring
Margaret L. Woods
Richard Middleton
Edward Thomas
R. A. Scott-James
Filson Young
Frederic Manning
Forrest Reid
Stephen Reynolds
Lady Margaret Sackville
The Duchess of Sutherland
G. S. Street
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Sir Gilbert Parker, M.P.
Walter Whitehead, F.R.C.S., F.R.S.
Norman Douglas
Flora Annie Steele
Elizabeth Robbins
Ella d'Arcy
Sir Frank Swettenham
Camille Mauclair
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E. J. Dillon
Professor M. A. Gerothwohl, Litt.D.
Dora Clement Shorter
Lord Courtnay
Lady Welby
H. de Vere Stacpoole
D. H. Lawrence
Hugh Walpole
Edwin Pugh
John M. Robertson, M.P.
H. M. Hyndman
E. Hutton

In an article in the *Spectator* of June 10th The English Review has been accused of "dumping garbage upon the nation's doorstep." The above list of writers, all of whom have written for the Review during the last year and a half, constitutes the only serious answer that can be given to an attack couched in language purely journalistic and uncritical. I do not myself feel competent to judge the morality of these writers, but, of course, if Mr. St. Loe Strachey claims the right to do so it is no affair of mine.

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Frank Harris can take care of himself. I wish only to say that the writer of the article in the *Spectator*, by piecing together two sentences and omitting a very important qualifying paragraph absolutely essential to the right understanding of the argument, has entirely misrepresented the writer.

With regard to the pamphlet about the "Great Adult Review" which the *Spectator* condemns, I have to say that it was withdrawn by me before the appearance of the *Spectator* attack, as the wording laid itself open to the very objections the *Spectator* has so eagerly seized upon. These objections were that by advertising ourselves as an Adult Review, where men of letters could express themselves free from the irritating degradation of editorial excision, we thereby exposed ourselves to malicious misrepresentation. To accuse us of selling garbage because we advertised the fact that our standard was not that of the schoolroom is a distortion of truth. The point is really what we sell. Now, what we sell is the best work obtainable from the writers whose names head this statement. The proof of the pie is in the eating. Our pamphlet may have been unhappily worded, but it is literary dishonesty to argue that therefore our tone is prurient. Finally, I may say that I cannot persuade our advertising manager to recognise the *Spectator's* tutelage.

So far as the attack concerns the general tone and tendency of the Review, it is perhaps wise to point out that as we do not appeal to the young and the illiterate, therefore an organ such as ours may claim for itself the right of reasonable freedom of expression and discussion.

The curious attempt on the part of the *Spectator* to stir up ill-feeling in the Liberal Press against us is so discreditable a breach of journalistic ethics and fair play that I need not characterise it here. It reduces the attack to a simple act of persecution, nothing more.

The writer in the *Spectator* quotes a phrase of Green (whom, by the way, he misspells) in support of his claim, but Green wrote other verses, one of which begins :

> "Mothers and guardian aunts, forbear
> Your impious pains—" etc.

No doubt, as he is such an important judge of literature he will remember the rest. It was Yvette Guilbert who spoke a brave and true word the other day when she talked of the English "shamefaced attitude" towards art and literature. Well, some of us may remember an illustration of du Maurier

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in *Punch* some years ago, which depicted an old maid very much shocked at the sight of some bathers on the distant side of a lake. "But they are too far off to be indecent," remarked her companion. "Not if you use a glass," objected the old maid.

Exactly!

AUSTIN HARRISON.

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The Police and the Public

By Edward Abinger, Barrister-at-Law

The conduct of the police, collectively or individually, from time to time comes before the public either by way of Royal Commission or Special Commission or Inquiry.

This last-mentioned form of procedure was ordered by the Home Secretary following the trial of Stinie Morrison, but it was limited strictly to an inquiry into the incidents relating to the arrest of the prisoner.

The Home Secretary is certainly to be congratulated upon having ordered the inquiry, as the public mind was no doubt greatly exercised by the extraordinary spectacle of the evidence of several Metropolitan police-constables being contradicted point-blank by the evidence of yet another police-constable.

Unfortunately, there is no power to administer the oath to witnesses upon such an inquiry, and consequently the learned Commissioner, Mr. Cave, K.C., to use his own expression, "had to get on as well as he could without it." There is not the least doubt but that these public inquiries serve a most useful purpose, whatever the result in any particular case may be.

The police as a body constitute a most excellent force, and it is highly necessary that they should, for they occupy the unique position of not only protecting the lives and property of His Majesty's liege subjects, but also of holding the liberty and even the lives of the public very much at their disposal. If a member of the public orders the arrest of another person and is afterwards sued in an action for false imprisonment, he has to prove two things to avoid being mulcted in damages —namely: (1) That he had reasonable grounds to suspect the plaintiff had committed a felony; and (2) that a felony was, in fact, committed. A police-officer, however, who arrests a person, when on duty, is in a much better position, for to escape a verdict he has only to prove to the satisfaction of a jury that he had reasonable grounds to suspect the person he arrested of having committed a felony. Armed with these extraordinary powers it is manifestly most important, when the occasion demands it, that an inquiry should be held in

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public into the conduct of the police-officers involved. Two useful purposes are served—the one to maintain the confidence which the public should entertain towards the police, and the other to jealously safeguard the public against any oppression or malpractice on the part of the police.

A certain proportion of our population requires particularly careful protection, and this by reason of the strange anomalies of our law. For instance, to bet is not unlawful, but to bet in the streets or in a "place" where persons resort for the purposes of betting is unlawful. Prostitution is not unlawful, but to accost or solicit for that purpose is unlawful. To be intoxicated is not unlawful, but to be drunk "and disorderly" in the streets or in a licensed house is unlawful. These particular classes of offence, therefore, only become offences by reason of the particular circumstances under which they are committed, and there must be of necessity considerable latitude or discretion left to the particular police-officer whether or not he will take action. The publican who serves a drunken person with liquor is in danger of losing his licence; a woman "accosting" in the streets is in danger of fine or imprisonment, and a person betting in the streets or at a "place" is in like danger. Several cases of this description were inquired into in the recent Royal Commission, but I do not think that any case of bribery or malpractice in this connection was established against the police.

But it is perhaps, after all, in preparing a case for prosecution, whether for murder, felony or some minor offence, and in giving evidence in the witness-box, that the police require most careful watching. The police start off with the assumption that an accused person is guilty, and every inquiry is made, and every link is sought to be established, and every witness called, with a view of securing a verdict of guilty. It is therefore not unnatural that any fact which tends to exculpate the accused is not brought forward by the police, but is left to the accused or his advocate, if he has one, to establish. It is very difficult to see how this can be avoided, but, if detected, it should be most severely punished. It frequently happens that an accused person himself may be ignorant of facts in existence which may tend to disprove his guilt. Such a case came under my own notice. The accused was tried for burglary, and the case turned entirely upon the question of identity. Several witnesses were called who were positive that the prisoner was the man. I received information that a man bearing a strong resemblance to the prisoner had been sought for by the police, but had not

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been found. The police upon cross-examination admitted the fact, with the result that the accused man was acquitted. It must not, however, be supposed that police discipline is lax; on the contrary, it is even more stringent than in the Army or Navy. Any misconduct, if detected, is most severely punished. Complaints made by a subordinate officer against his superiors must be established up to the hilt or disaster will surely follow. An instance of this sort came to light during the course of the recent Stinie Morrison police inquiry. Constable "A" was reported by Police-sergeant "B" for "not working his beat and being insolent when spoken to." Constable "A" stated in his defence that during the time when he was supposed to be "not working his beat" he had met and spoken to another constable, "C," who was patrolling the adjacent beat. Constable "C" was ordered to report, and corroborated Constable "A." The superintendent accordingly reported: "This charge falls through." Now as to the charge of insolence. Constable "A" admitted using the words complained of, but complained to the superintendent that Sergeant "B's" conduct towards him had for some time been aggressive, and that Constable "D" could corroborate him. In due course Constable "D" made a statement tending to corroborate Constable "A" with regard to this matter.

Both constables "A" and "D" were brought before the Chief Constable. The charge against "A" of using improper language to his sergeant, "B," was found to be proved; the charge of aggressive conduct by Sergeant "B" not proved. Constable "A" was "awarded" a reduction of 3s. a week for six weeks, severely reprimanded, strictly cautioned, and transferred to another division. Constable "D," who gave evidence on behalf of Constable "A," was suspended from duty, and the same day his uniform and appointments were taken from him. Pay was stopped during suspension. Later he appeared before a disciplinary board at Great Scotland Yard and was severely reprimanded, strictly cautioned, and transferred to another division. He appealed. The Commissioner, in dismissing his appeal, stated *inter alia:* "In the first place, you went out of your way in mixing yourself up with Constable "A's" case in the way you did. If I had tried your case I don't think I should have dealt with it so lightly, and unless you mend your ways, and you come before me again, I don't think that the service will be able to keep you in it. The award is confirmed."

For the protection of the public police orders are from time

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to time published, and constables are required to conform strictly to them, severe punishment following any infraction of them. Any unbiased person reading them will frankly acknowledge that every human precaution is taken by police-officers in high positions to prevent any injury or prejudice or unnecessary inconvenience to an accused person. Here a couple of most excellent orders: (101) "Should any person arrested desire to be conveyed to the station in a cab and offer to pay the fare, this course may be adopted if there is no risk of escape, and if the distance from the station makes the request reasonable. When the prisoner is a female the officer arresting is to obtain the services of a second constable to accompany him in the cab"; and (102) "As a general rule, when a constable is about to arrest a person, or has effected an arrest, it is improper to put questions to that person. If on reading his warrant or stating his intentions to arrest, any statement is made voluntarily by such person, it should be carefully listened to and written down at the time, or as soon thereafter as possible. It is unnecessary to caution a person making, or about to make, a voluntary statement.

"But with due regard to the above directions, and to the necessity of abstaining from questioning a prisoner on points touching the offence, *or from acting in any way unfairly towards him*, by inducing him to divulge anything, or make any confession, there are two classes of questions which it may be necessary to put to such a person:—

(1) When arresting or about to arrest under a warrant (either in personal possession or known to be in existence) questions may properly be put having reference solely to the identity of the person arrested, or about to be arrested. with the person named in the warrant. And it will be equally justifiable to adopt the same course in all cases of arrest or proposed arrest without warrant where any doubt or uncertainty as to the identity arises or may arise.

(2) When about to arrest without a warrant a person upon suspicion of having committed an offence, questions may properly be put to such a person if they can, in the circumstances, be occasionally regarded as *likely to operate in the interest of such a person, and the answers to which may possibly tend to remove or explain the existing suspicion, and the necessity of the arrest be thus obviated.*

"But police-officers acting under head (2) must always use great care and discretion, and, in general, if questions put to

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suspected persons are likely to lead, as they often do, to replies which may incriminate them, *a caution should in the first place be given.*"

I recently had a conversation with an eminent French police-officer in Paris. I remarked that an enormous quantity of crime in England went undetected, and instanced the "Jack the Ripper" murders, the murder of the woman Dimmock, the woman Rose Hersent, the Bournemouth murder, the Berners Street murder, the Gorse Hall murder, and many others. "Ah, monsieur," he remarked, "your police methods are not up-to-date!" I asked him in what respect. "To commence with," he replied, "we have here in Paris a whole army of well-organised police informers. When a crime is committed in a particular 'quarter' we not only instruct the police in that 'quarter' but our informers as well, and it is from this latter class that we expect to get the best information. We keep a special dossier for all suspected persons and another for Anarchists, whose daily movements are noted."

From our English point of view, no doubt, a spy or informer is a most contemptible and objectionable calling, but with the enormous population of London, and the immense number of aliens who dwell amongst us, it is almost a necessity to employ such men, if crime is to be detected. Whether or not our Metropolitan police have any such system I do not know, but if they have, I doubt whether it is organised in the manner described to me by my French informant. One rarely hears of a malefactor being brought to justice by such an agency.

Assume a crime has been committed and the murderer or felon gets away undetected, his chance of ultimate escape is very great.

But criminals, as a rule, have confidants, and reside in lodgings, and consequently have landlords and landladies, and it is from this class and the frequenters of low-class cafés and "tavernes" that the police informer in Continental cities is drawn. It is well-nigh impossible that a crime should be premeditated, prepared, and committed without some person other than the criminal himself having some knowledge or inkling of it. The absence from home on the night in question is always a valuable clue to start working upon. Some years ago Mr. Woodfall, now His Honour Judge Woodfall, and myself defended two men, Fowler and Milsom, for the crime then known as the Muswell Hill murder. The detection and conviction of these men was almost entirely due to the excellent system of inquiring at the registered address of convicts released upon

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license where they were on the night the crime was committed. A small toy lantern had been left in the premises by the murderers, and this slender clue was all that the police possessed. A police-officer called at Milsom's address, he being a convict upon licence, and a child at once recognised the lantern as his. But for this call, the crime would in all probability never have been brought home to the prisoners. But if the criminal has not been previously convicted the task is obviously enormously increased, and it is precisely in this sort of case that the police informer or "Nark," as such persons are described here, becomes invaluable. I have hitherto only mentioned murder cases, which, of course, come under the full glare of public notice, but large numbers of less serious crimes are undoubtedly daily committed in the metropolis without detection. I daresay that many readers of this article have personal experience of this. A burglary is committed, or a larceny; then follows a complaint at the nearest police station, and the matter rests there. Only the other day one Harvey Phillip Trevor, who had been only five weeks at large after serving a term of penal servitude, declared that during those five weeks' liberty he committed over one hundred serious crimes, escaping detection on each occasion. This may, of course, be an exaggeration, but there is no doubt that this skilful person committed a considerable number of offences undetected before being laid by the heels. Of course, we cannot expect the police automatically to place their hands upon the right persons when a crime has been committed, but there is little room for doubt that our present system of police surveillance could be greatly improved upon. For example, a register could be kept at each police-station in the country containing the names and addresses of persons who, although not convicted of crime, come under the description of "wasters" or "loafers" who do no honest work, hang about the vicinity of public-houses, and are at times to be found in the society of convicted persons. A register could also be kept of all aliens and their doings, and, in particular, their addresses should be carefully noted. All this could be effected without such persons having any knowledge of the fact, and I do not hesitate to affirm that such registers would enormously strengthen the hands of the police. The registers should, of course, be kept in strict privacy, and every possible step and precaution taken to prevent their being used as a means of oppression. When a crime is reported in a particular district the police would at any rate have something

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tangible to start working upon. I do not think it an exaggeration to state that almost every day, certainly every week, some tradesman's or jeweller's shop is successfully raided and many thousands of pounds secured. How many of the perpetrators of these robberies are detected? Unfortunately, only a small proportion. Once the thief is round the corner he is, comparatively speaking, safe, unless he incautiously attempts to pawn or dispose of the property in its *then* condition. But the professional thief is generally far too wise to attempt to do this. In an incredibly short time the gems are torn from their settings, the movements of the watches removed, the precious metals melted down, and then the robber is free to deal with the receivers, who, by the way, appear to be better known to the thieves than to the police. *Nemo fuit repente turpissimus* is an old maxim, but it is none the worse for that. In other words, a man who is capable of planning and successfully carrying out the raiding of a jeweller's shop, with all the daring and audacity necessary for such an undertaking, has in all probability had a long apprenticeship in crime, *and this class of person should be known to the police.* Inquiry could then in the first instance, and immediately the robbery is reported, be made with a fair chance of the speedy capture of the culprit. At present, so far as I am acquainted with our police system, the course adopted is to send a printed information list from time to time to each police-station containing full particulars of all reported crimes, etc.

This information list emanates from the Metropolitan Police Office, and is divided under various heads:

"*Property Stolen.*" Then follows, item by item, a description of the stolen property and the addresses of the jewellers, tradesmen and persons at whose premises the burglary or housebreaking has been committed.

"*Wanted for Crime.*" Then follow the names and descriptions of persons against whom informations have been laid, and who are wanted.

"*In Custody for Crime.*" With the names of the persons detained, and the offences with which such persons are charged.

"*Property Lost or Stolen.*" With full description of such property, and the owners thereof.

"*Property Found,*" etc., etc., etc.

All this is no doubt excellent in its way, but the question is, what steps are taken to discover the thieves by the police at the various police-stations upon receipt of these information

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lists? In the first place lists of the stolen property are circulated at once at all the pawnbroking establishments. Now pawnbrokers, as a class, require much greater police supervision than is bestowed upon them at present. The temptation to take in pledge an article of great value, and to advance a small sum of money upon it, is probably very great. The pledger may never redeem the article, and certainly will not if it be stolen. At the expiration of the statutory period the pawnbroker can himself sell the property in the manner prescribed, and, subject to the obligation imposed upon him by the statute, to account to the pledger for the amount realised by the sale, which right is not likely to be exercised by the thief, the pawnbroker keeps for himself the moneys obtained by the sale.

One often reads in the daily Press of censures passed by police magistrates upon pawnbrokers for their negligence in not making inquiries before taking in pledge articles which are subsequently proved to have been stolen, and, as a mark of the magisterial disapprobation, the pawnbrokers are ordered to return the articles so pledged to the true owner without their receiving the amount of money advanced upon the chattels.

The hands of the police would be greatly strengthened in bringing the less-experienced class of criminal to justice if pawnbrokers were compelled to make a weekly return to the police of all property taken in pledge during the week, together with a full description of such property and the names and addresses of the persons pledging the same. Any remissness in making such return should be visited with severe penalties. These provisions would render it well-nigh impossible for any pawnbroker to overlook, accidentally or otherwise, property in his possession set forth in the police notice. I do not wish to do any injustice to pawnbrokers, who, no doubt, on many occasions give valuable information to the police resulting in the arrest of offenders, but, nevertheless, one cannot doubt that such provisions would be most salutary.

I now pass to a final topic, and it is a pleasing one—namely, the accessibility of the highest police officials in cases of urgency, and their cheerful and ready acquiescence in taking prompt steps, regardless of personal inconvenience, when the interests of justice require it. It will be remembered that on the very eve of the conclusion of the Morrison trial information was received by the prisoner's advisers that a police-constable could give important evidence in favour of the prisoner. One

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of the highest police officials in the kingdom, although not advised of this fact until 11 o'clock at night, nevertheless, at the greatest possible personal inconvenience, went himself to the district where the particular police-constable was stationed, directed that the officer should be brought from his beat, informed the officer that if he told the truth, and made a *bona-fide* statement, he should not be prejudiced in his career, and then reduced his statement into writing, which proceeding took several hours, with the result that at about 1.30 a.m. the evidence was completed, and the officer was available as a witness for Morrison at 10.30 a.m. the same morning at the Central Criminal Court !

This being the conduct of the head of the police, let us hope that it will serve as a model and example to be followed by all subordinate officers from superintendents and chief inspectors down to the very rank-and-file of the force. Then we shall hear less and less of the frequent disputes commonly reported under the head of the " Police and the Public," and feelings of the most complete and ample confidence will be entertained by the whole community towards our police-force, which, imperfect as it may be. is yet the finest in the world.

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The Bone-setting Controversy

By H. A. Barker

My first words must certainly be those which can only faintly express my acknowledgment of Mr. Walter Whitehead's intervention on my behalf in last month's issue of The English Review. Even though he had never mentioned my name, but had simply tried to recall the Faculty to a saner and more defensible attitude towards manipulative surgery, my debt of gratitude would have been an undischargeable one. But he did more. He undertook to defend my character from the aspersions which had been cast upon it, and my work from the grave doubts which the recent trial undeniably created in the minds of many people. It is not for me to closely analyse the defence he put up on my behalf. It was generous beyond all my expectations, and will help me through even sterner opposition, and, if possible, greater prejudice, to steadily pursue the work to which I have already devoted nearly twenty years of my life. I recognise how much Mr. Whitehead has risked by his defence of me. The suggestion made in an editorial of one of the medical journals—though only an unimportant organ—that the General Medical Council might have something to say to Mr. Whitehead, indicates to me how far some members of the Professor are prepared to go in order to stamp out any vestige of support to a system of treatment which did not originate with the Faculty, and has upon the whole only met with its most merciless opposition. Fortunately, even the British Medical Association will hesitate before it attempts to dictate to a surgeon of the eminence of Mr. Whitehead. I am not likely therefore to be called upon to see another of my friends insulted because of his connection with me in my work. But none the less I deeply appreciate Mr. Whitehead's espousal of my cause, even though it does not lay him open to the same cruel and uncalled-for treatment which has been dealt out to Dr. Axham.

Perhaps I may be permitted to refer to the criticism which has been made upon Mr. Whitehead for publishing what he had to say in a lay paper. He has been told by the *Medical*

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Press that, unorthodox as was his action in undertaking to defend an unlegalised practitioner, he added to the original offence by making the medium of his views a periodical which was in no way connected with, nor controlled by, medical opinion. Does the Faculty really think that when a matter of general as well as professional importance has to be discussed, the only medium for this purpose is a medical journal? Because I am sure it has only to express that opinion publicly and without reserve in order to see what the medical world thinks about it. But I want to state plainly two facts which governed the choice of a medium for bringing the whole question before the public. Firstly, Mr. Whitehead was in no sense endeavouring to state in scientific terms, nor to describe precisely the methods of manipulative surgery, as he would have done if his aim had been to introduce them or to defend them before an audience exclusively professional. The almost entire absence of any technicalities must have suggested to medical readers of the article that his appeal mainly and most vitally was to the general public. Had he chosen a medical journal he would, by this election, have limited the circle of his readers to a very small number of practitioners who form the *clientèle* of the medical periodicals. He would have defeated his purpose, and he will, I am sure, forgive me for saying what I have no direct warrant for saying, that he prefers to meet the criticisms of even the *Medical Press* on this score rather than see his article practically buried in a paper of a purely official character. The far-reaching publicity secured for his views by their appearance in THE ENGLISH REVIEW is at once a justification of the wisdom of the choice and proof positive how great is the interest in the subject in non-medical quarters. Secondly, there was no guarantee that such an article as Mr. Whitehead designed would have been accepted by any one of the medical journals. My own experience has been a bitter one. The lay Press has always been open-minded and generous in its treatment of my cause. I do not say isolated instances of unfairness have not occurred. But, on the whole, the daily and other journals have been kind to me, even though they have occasionally severely criticised me. But they have never denied me the right of reply. They have opened their columns to me and permitted me great liberty, even licence, when I have tried to meet my enemies "in the gate."

The profession's papers, however, have never ceased to treat me with scorn and derision. In this respect the *Medical Press* has been the greatest offender. For years it has pursued me with

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unsleeping opposition. When I have attempted to answer some unusually bitter attack I have always found an editorial barrier placed in my way. Mr. Whitehead was aware of this treatment which had been meted out to me, and, I think very wisely, did not lay himself open to possible rebuff, but offered his article where he knew it would be accepted on its merits and for its general interest, and not excluded because it advocated a course of action distasteful to those who controlled the paper. If the medical papers feel aggrieved or slighted by Mr. Whitehead's action in passing them over, they have, in my opinion, no one to blame but themselves and the prejudice which, all though this controversy, has moved them to act in ways which, however they commend themselves to the medical mind, only condemn the profession in the eyes of the great outside world. What has been the effect of Mr. Whitehead's article? First of all, beyond all question, it has created a vast amount of interest and enquiry in non-medical circles. Almost every leading paper printed lengthy extracts from the article. Not a few devoted editorials to the subject. There has been general agreement shown in regarding his paper as of real importance and as stamping the methods it upheld with the hall-mark of worth.

Editors and correspondents have agreed with every show of reason, I think, that a professional man of Mr. Whitehead's eminence would not have come into the open, and in the most public manner possible have stated his belief in a system which the average practitioner denounced, unless he had the strongest proof of, and the most assured belief in, its value. Secondly, and in view of my aim even more important, is the widespread interest aroused in the medical world. I have every ground to say that it has come as a veritable revelation to hundreds of general practitioners to learn that methods they have neglected or condemned for years had won the approval of one of the most distinguished surgeons of the day. That is the fact upon which I dwell with the largest hope for the future. Mr. Whitehead's scholarly paper has broken down the wall of solid prejudice and has invaded the ignorance which characterised the average member of the Faculty with regard to this question. It has done more. It has moved many men to begin private investigation into the real manipulative methods as opposed to the faint and ineffective imitation of them practised by surgeons who, employing Swedish movements and massage, think they are perfectly acquainted with all that is valuable and effective in mechano-therapy. I am very sanguine,

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because I realise that if the investigations are only honest and thorough there will be, in the near future, a strong body of educated opinion which will demand that the methods of what Dr. Bryce calls "this new form of scientific bone-setting" shall be incorporated in the curricula of the hospital schools. It is not too much to say that the situation to-day is entirely different from what it was before Mr. Whitehead's article appeared. It was easy for the Faculty and the medical Press to refuse my appeals, to abuse me, and to ignore the evidence which pointed to the real worth of the methods. It was easy for the *British Medical Journal*, for instance, to deny me the opportunity of replying to Professor Howard Marsh's article on bone-setting in a recent issue of that paper. But the Faculty cannot ignore Mr. Whitehead or shut their eyes to the defence of manipulative surgery which he has made.

Dr. Alexander Bryce's article on the subject—by far the most informed article by a medical man which has yet appeared—seems to have fallen flat. His appeal for further study of methods to which he bears the strongest personal testimony has been absolutely unheeded, so far as I can discover, by the Faculty as a body. Dr. Bryce has evidently got a firm grip of the principles of the methods, and by practice will doubtless develop his knowledge of them and his facility in employing them. But when he published his discoveries in a medical journal he doomed them to expire unnoticed. Mr. Whitehead's article will not sink out of the public notice readily, and the increasing publicity should entail upon the profession action of some kind. It is for the Faculty to determine what that action shall be, but of one thing I am convinced—the policy of silence cannot much longer be persisted in. The growth of opinion and knowledge within the Faculty itself will force the hands of the Medical Council, and very possibly force also on them a method of procedure very different from that hitherto adopted. Further, the policy of oblique persecution recently adopted should, by Mr. Whitehead's article, be made impossible for the future. To strike at me through my anæsthetist is a course at once puerile and contemptible. The Medical Council will not by this drastic treatment prevent surgeons from associating themselves with me, of that they may rest assured. If it is persisted in they may provoke an agitation and a demand in Parliament itself for a revision of the law under which they exercise their powers—powers which are not granted to any other corporation in the world. *Truth* did not exaggerate when it said in its issue of June 14th: "The recent action of

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the General Medical Council shows that it cannot be safely trusted with the exclusive and final custody of the statutory register of medical practitioners." I should be guilty of an unforgivable want of consideration if I did not refer to the treatment dealt out by the General Medical Council to my friend Dr. Axham. The public ought to know that before this gentleman associated himself with me he took every precaution to inform himself as to the nature and character of my work. I forget how many visits he paid to my house in order that he might observe my methods, but I believe he attended on nearly fifty occasions. At that time my operations were performed without any anæsthetic being administered, and it was the sight of the unnecessary suffering entailed by the operations which led Dr. Axham—once he had satisfied himself as to the utility of the methods employed—to suggest that both the operator and the patient would benefit by the administration of an anæsthetic. Ultimately he agreed to associate himself with me, and for many years he has given anæsthetics to my patients when occasion required, with the greatest skill, tact, and kindness. My patients have benefited. I have been enabled whilst they were unconscious for the few minutes necessary for the operation to act more freely and with greater confidence, knowing that they suffered no pain. During the whole of this period not one single accident has occurred, not one atom of injury has been caused to any patient during some thousands of operations. The vast majority of those who have sought my aid have come to me as a last hope. They have given the orthodox practitioners every opportunity of affording the relief they sought and needed.

I am confident that once the public have grasped the fact that my offence is that I do relieve sufferers when orthodox means have failed, and that Dr. Axham's "infamous conduct" is that he has aided and abetted—and still aids and abets—me in doing so, they will realise how unjust is the power granted to the Medical Council and how unsparingly they exercise it. As *Truth* declared, in a recent leading article, entitled "Bone-setting and Priestcraft": "There is here a conflict between orthodoxy and heterodoxy in a matter of scientific doctrine, and this it is which gives such an ugly complexion to the attempt of the professional organisations to cripple Mr. Barker's practice by proclaiming against him a professional boycott, and making it impossible for him to obtain the services of a qualified anæsthetist. We pass here from the sphere of medical trade-unionism to that of medical priestcraft, for the persecution

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of men like Mr. Barker is inspired by every spirit of priest-craft, assuming itself to be the sole depository of truth, and to be justified in using any means it can lay hold of to stamp out heresy. That powers conferred by the State for public ends should be used by what calls itself orthodoxy for the purpose of crushing what is called unorthodoxy is as intolerable in these days in the sphere of medicine as it is in that of religion, and it is even more at variance with the public interests in the former case than in the latter." Mr. Axham's offence is set forth there in its true light and proportion. It is for the public to say whether this course of conduct on the part of the Medical Council is, or is not, to be supported. The truest interests of the public are involved. If it is allowed to continue they will be as ruthlessly and as selfishly sacrificed as were the interests of true religion by the domination of a religious order in the days we have left for ever behind us. Now I want to refer to the trial which took place last February. Mr. Whitehead has expressed his opinion of the verdict. What I desire to say refers to my connection with the plaintiff. In the first place he sought my aid voluntarily. He had been under several surgeons for a period of nine years, the whole of which time the limb had given him trouble. It was admittedly tuberculous. Now I am not, and have never professed to be, a specialist in this disease, but scarcely a week goes by in which I am not consulted by persons who suffer from it in some form or another. The symptoms are perfectly familiar to me, and I recognised at once what the plaintiff's trouble was. I warned him in the plainest language. He was, or had been, a medical student and openly expressed his disbelief in the opinion of the doctors he had consulted. I repeated my view, and advised him to see a specialist without loss of time. He begged me to help him at least to the extent of advising some means of ameliorating his condition. It was only after pressure that I suggested to him the use of radiant-heat baths. He assented, and though I told him quite frankly that the relief would necessarily be but temporary, and gave him the name of two well-known surgeons whom he ought to consult, he decided to take a course of hot-air treatment. When this was ended he again came to my house for the purpose of seeing what effect the baths had had. I examined the joint under an anæsthetic administered by Dr. Axham. My earlier opinion was confirmed, and again I pressed upon him the extreme advisability of seeing a consultant. He dissented vigorously, affirmed that he was better, and expressed a desire to continue

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with the radiant-heat treatment. Again, after a short interval, he called upon me, and once more I examined the limb. That any violence, such as the doctors suggested, was used is distinctly contrary to the facts. Mr. Whitehead and the two surgeons who examined the amputated limb agreed and swore that had violence of the kind suggested been used the plaintiff would not have been able to leave my house, owing to the collapse which would have resulted as its immediate consequence. He left my room exactly in the same condition as he entered it. The theory of the doctors who appeared in support of the plaintiff's case was that the bacilli had become encapsulated—in other words, the disease had been isolated and rendered comparatively harmless—and in time the plaintiff might have made such a recovery as would have left the leg slightly impaired but still a fairly serviceable member. The allegation was that the violence I had used whilst he was under the anæsthetic had destroyed the encapsulation, liberated the microbes, and ultimately necessitated the amputation of the leg above the knee-joint. Two points call for notice. First, the sworn evidence of Dr. Axham that absolutely nothing in the nature of violence was used on the occasions the plaintiff was under gas. This was supported by two other doctors, who expressed the opinion that had an encapsulated knee-joint been broken down operative measures would have been called for within a week or two, whereas almost three months elapsed before the operation actually took place, during which time the plaintiff went about his business till within a week or ten days before the amputation was undertaken! Secondly, no evidence was tendered to show that the disease had become encapsulated at all. It was agreed by my doctors that in order to ensure encapsulation perfect rest of the limb was absolutely essential for a long period. It was admitted that the plaintiff had engaged in violent exercises such as swimming and tennis-playing during the summer months before he first visited me. Mr. Whitehead points out that to establish the plaintiff's case it was necessary to show that he had a reasonable chance of recovery and that I destroyed that chance by my negligent treatment, and that such violence had been used by me as to irreparably damage the leg. "Not one of these things was shown," declares Mr. Whitehead, and his experience and judgment equal those of any surgeon called to establish the plaintiff's case. I submit that, had the evidence governed the verdict, it would have been in my favour. The ridiculous damages awarded only perplexed the outsider. Either I was

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guilty of negligent treatment, and richly deserved to be cast in heavy damages, or I was not. The compensation awarded by the jury simply pointed to the desire on their part to do justice to both sides—a characteristically English trait—and *that* they thought was achieved by awarding the plaintiff the fees he had paid me for such advice and attention as I had given him. My own feeling in regard to the matter is one of profound astonishment that the plaintiff ever instituted it. All through the period he was with me he expressed nothing but satisfaction with, and gratitude for, the manner in which I had received him, and the care I had bestowed upon his case. Yet in the face of this—after all the trouble I took out of sheer sympathy with him in his trouble—he countenanced an action which could have no other object than my professional ruin! At the trial it transpired that the doctors had suggested and supported the claim. The verdict had scarcely been given when a telegram reached me to the effect that, from the sender's own knowledge, the plaintiff had been "talked into" bringing the action by his medical advisers. I don't grumble if they imagine it to be a part of their professional duty to place upon me the responsibility of curing a limb they had failed to relieve, and of securing, or of attempting to secure, from me damages for their patient if I failed to cure a limb which was doomed to amputation, according to medical evidence, before I ever saw it! But I am justified in protesting against the extraordinary means they adopted to achieve that object. Mr. Whitehead has stigmatised these in appropriate terms, and expressed the indignation an entirely honourable and distinguished surgeon feels at the result of the trial. From not a few quarters the advice reaches me to cease my public protests and to pursue my calling in quietness. If I were solely bent on amassing money that advice would be the most agreeable to my feelings, and I should certainly accept and follow it. But I can honestly affirm that I am not bent upon reaping the rich harvest of fees such knowledge as I possess places within my reach. My ambition is to see the work I have done recognised by those whose recognition, I humbly venture to think, should have been the earliest offered to one, who in some poor way has tried to widen the bounds of the knowledge within the reach of those who profess the healing art. That recognition has been withheld for reasons which I deem not altogether to the credit of the Faculty. Nevertheless, I conceive it to be my duty to persist not only in the practice of the methods of manipulative surgery, but

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also in my endeavour to secure for them adoption by men of science which will afford me solid grounds for hoping that, when I am no longer able to work, they will still be available for the relief of those sufferers whom it has been my great privilege and my pride to aid for many years. I do not ask some unreasonable thing when I desire that the methods should receive unprejudiced and thorough examination by those best able to test their efficacy and value. Curiously enough, what the Faculty seem to be anxious to press upon the public is that they are perfectly cognisant of the methods of manipulation and that in every hospital of any note they are in constant use.

Professor Howard Marsh — than whom no more able member of his profession lives—in the *British Medical Journal* of June 3rd devotes column after column the only possible meaning and purpose of which is to establish the proposition that all the secrets of manipulative surgery are open secrets—that is, known and used by the faculty since the days of Hutton and Wharton Hood. Very good. Then will Mr. Howard Marsh explain how it is that out of the hundreds of cases which pass through my hands in scarcely a single instance has any patient hinted that the treatment I employ has been used by orthodox surgeons? Or will he explain how it is that people whose means and position are such that they can, and do, command the ripest knowledge in the surgical world, fail to obtain it from many surgeons through a long series of years? The truth is—and the sooner it is admitted the sooner this controversy will end—my methods and the methods to which Professor Howard Marsh refers are as different as possible.

In conclusion, may I say that this controversy is neither pleasant nor profitable either to the Faculty as a whole or to me individually. It can be ended by a just and generous concession on the part of the Profession by examining—under any fair tests—the methods Dr. Bryce investigated with such an increase of his own knowledge and such advantage to the people who consulted him. I appeal for that in the hope that even now they will grant my request, confident that the issue will fully justify my often-repeated demand and their long-delayed concession. An arrogant isolation can do nothing either to expose charlatanism or to further the cause of science.

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The Russian Ballet

HAVING lived in complete ignorance all these years of the artistic culture of the Russians, we can now see at the Opera the most complete expression of dancing ever witnessed in this country. For us dancing has long been an art in agony. We took little interest in it; and if it survived at all, it lived only by tradition and what satisfaction we could glean from the high-kicking of the halls. The technique, the steps of the classical ballet are nothing to us; the figures are void of sense; we are only interested in the lightness and agility of the young women who dance with more or less winged foot without any attempt to analyse their gestures. That is to say, for us dancing has come to have no meaning. Another reason is, of course, that ballet music no longer exists among us. The result, of course, has been that as an art dancing has lost all virtue. Ignorant of choreography, accustomed merely to eccentric or acrobatic dancing, we are suddenly presented with the art of the Russian ballet. The music which serves as pretext to their dances may not receive the high approbation of musicians, but the rhythms of Rimsky Korsakoff, of Borodine, and of Glasounoff are so original and powerful that they constrain both admiration and pleasure. But if the music is not the most important thing, *mise en scène*, the decorations and the costumes are all important. To be sure, the Russians are not the first to discover the necessity of harmonious setting, but they have gone much further than European theatres have ever gone, and in this line they have become creators. The *trompe-l'œil* of our modern theatre has resulted in elaborate photographic representation of the scene of action. To this the Russians have added art. With the aid of means deliberately, almost excessively simple, they have raised the place of action into the atmosphere of art. Impressionists they may be called, but it is an impression of vivid realisation. The eye is no longer shocked by disproportion, the attention is not distracted by minute and useless details of theatrical elaboration. With the Russians the scene becomes a caressing and harmonious scheme in which the personages stand out in sharp relief as the integral

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part of the picture. And these personages, which are always grouped according to the laws of eurythmy, are clothed in marvellous raiment. The same artist who designed the decoration chose the costumes, combined the colours, arranged the grouping and the lights. It is he who in the ballet *Scheherazade* insisted on those greens and that pale gold, that red spot in the costume of the Grand Eunuch, that rustling of gauze veils studded with jewellery. It is he who in *Cleopatra* insisted on the blue lights which match the darker blues of the tunics. In a word, these ballets are pictures, a very riot of colours and tones harmoniously mingled, where one sees the eye of the artist as in the use of black or some fierce colour forming a whole of a most exquisite and most certain taste. So much for the setting.

The Russians have brought over to us three kinds of dances: The classical ballets as we used to know them and as they have been handed down to us by the Czars since Queen Catherine attached the Milanese Ballet School to her Court. They have revealed to us their own national dances. Finally, they have given us original works strongly impregnated with local colour, the imaginative creation of their own masters of ballet. Even those who know little of the *pointes*, the *jetés-battus* of the dancers realise that the Russians have carried the art of classical dancing far beyond anything that any one of us could ever have seen in this country. Their interpretation is technically remarkable, but perhaps the most striking thing that they give us is the revival of the male dancer. This was a dead art in Europe, as we realise when we see the Prince Charming of the pantomime, who, of course, is always a girl. The Russians, on the contrary, have developed the education of their male dancers equally with that of the women, with the result that their art has been enormously strengthened and diversified. These male dancers are as supple as the women, their movements have the same elegance, and their beautiful figures add a note of character and energy which disappeared when ballets became solely the medium of feminine dancing. Fortunately, they have not kept strictly to the old French school, for they have added their own Polish dances. Finally, and above all, they have revealed in *Cleopatra*, *Scheherazade* and *l'Oiseau de Feu* a wonderful new art admirably adapted to the exigencies of our modern sensibility, derived, no doubt, from the Russian civilisation and customs. *Scheherazade* and *Antar* are supreme in their expression of Oriental colour and atmosphere. The genius of their *maîtres de ballets*, joined with that of their

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decorators, has enabled them to translate choreographically the splendours of the Thousand and One Nights. Words cannot describe the spectacle of their magnificent pantomime, their wild dances with their disturbing and caressing ardour. It is the madness of movement, of sight, of the senses. The ballet *Scheherazade* especially is the most fantastic realisation that the imagination can conceive on the stage. This impression is due, not only to the beauty of the setting, of the costumes and of the lighting, of the dancing, of the constant change of movement up to the very apotheosis of the bacchanalian festival—it is due quintessentially to the artistic conscience not only of the designers, but of the interpretators, from the smallest to the biggest. This is perhaps the most characteristic feature of these Russian ballets. An absolute co-ordination exists among all collaborators, an artistic desire to interpret each particular rôle in the exact proportion to the general scheme of illusion. The art of the Russian dancers appeals to all. It is essentially sensuous, luscious and joyful. It appeals to all the senses, dispensing joy of colour and of light, depending for its effect rather on the co-ordination of the whole than on nobility of attitude. It is an art of interpretation, an art at once plastic and decorative, and in this sense it is in harmony with the modern idea which demands from art not only perfection and a very great richness of form, but that the art itself shall be expressive.

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D'Annunzio's New Play—"St. Sebastian."*

By A. Vivanti Chartres

And Jesus saith . . . "Touch Me not."—*St. John.*

In Gabriele d'Annunzio's "Forse che si, forse che no" Isabella Inghirami imagines that she hears someone constantly walking up and down in her brain. Up and down, up and down, go the dreary, monotonous footsteps in the dark and narrow passage. Even so has d'Annunzio, with the gift of miracle-working that is vouchsafed to all poets, imprisoned himself within his own mind, and for the past twenty years—ever since his first superb and glowing poems astounded Italy—he has trodden monotonously up and down in the narrow limits of d'Annunzianism, which is but the glorification of self, the apotheosis of self, the nothingness of all things which are not self. Of all the vast horizons that were open to his flight, of all the heights that might have been attained, all the wide blue spaces to have swept through and sung in, he has chosen this narrow prison of his own making, in which to stalk incessantly backwards and forwards. And now, after all these years, even though he try, he cannot get out of himself, he cannot get away from himself, and look at things through clear eyes and in broad perspective. He always stands in his own range of vision.

His books are like the play of two opposite mirrors, showing d'Annunzio's literary self innumerable times reflected.

No doubt when, two years ago, he made up his mind to write his latest work, "The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian," he thought he was moving into a wider atmosphere; perhaps he really intended to soar into the pure realms of sacred art. But, alas! the genius of d'Annunzio has no wings. His

* The Editor in no way holds himself responsible for expressions of signed criticisms.

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feathers are all quills. In vain does he cast over his curtailed shoulders the mantle of iridescent phrase, of spangled epithet and glittering imagery. To-day, even in his attempt to reach a sublime subject, he can but leap and caper, he can but vault and bound; bereft of pinions he cannot rise above the earth. This fact will be recognised in his own statement that he would never have thought of writing this religious "Mystery" had he not met a Jewish dancing-girl, whose extreme thinness of face and limb inspired him. "No other St. Sebastian," he declared, "can compare in strength and purity of expression with the vision offered by this artist, whose muscles only just suffice to support a drapery of dream and pain. She appears to be emancipated from the trammels of flesh." A thin dancing-girl! This to his mind was the ideal incarnation of the soldier-saint.

And thus, fired with enthusiasm, and in order better to fit the holy centurion's armour to the frail figure of Mademoiselle Ida Rubinstein, Signor d'Annunzio forsook Italy and the Italian language, and betook himself to the boulevards of Paris and to the language of Peladan—le Sar Peladan whom he has so frequently pillaged.

"The Archbishop wrongs me! He reproaches me for allowing the saint to be personified by a woman," explained the poet to his Parisian friends shortly before the performance of the play, and referring to the archiepiscopal letter of censure. "But the Rubinstein is not a woman. C'est l'androgine! C'est le monstre gentil qui est vierge, dieu et jeune homme. Ah, this gives a strange rare flavour to my work."

In truth, the emaciated figure of this dancer dominates the "Mystery," and casts across its four long acts a perturbing and ambiguous shadow.

There are undoubtedly some moments of real beauty in the first act. When Claude Debussy's opening music, beating soft wings on harp and violin, has attuned our spirit to the coming mystery, the starry curtain is drawn aside, and the twin martyrs, Marcus and Marcellianus, are revealed, bound to two columns. Fiery coals are heaped in front of them in readiness for the ultimate sacrifice. A sullen crowd murmurs threateningly. In the centre of the stage—the background is a vast garden of lilies—stands the golden-armoured figure of the youthful archer of Lebanon, his left hand resting on his great bow, his glossy curls lying lightly on his shoulders.

During the entire tumultuous scenes that follow—while the

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heart-broken mother of the martyrs pleads for mercy, while the five little sisters, white-veiled, hide their flower-like faces and weep, while the crowd surges and roars—the statuesque immobility of the silent, golden-armoured figure dominates the scene. What if this silence be borrowed from Parsifal?—it grips us all the same. When at last Sebastian raises his pallid brow and speaks, we are ready for a great sensation. But it is not given to us. His first words bewilder. What language is he speaking?

> Je prends entre mes poings le rouge
> Cœur nu de votre foi, mes frères. . .
> Et je le hausse vers le haut
> Ciel. . . .

Le rouge cœur? Le haut ciel? What language is this? It is Italian spoken in French, and, as it happens, with a Russian accent. "Si jamais vous m'aimâtes," continues Mademoiselle Rubinstein; and a little flutter of laughter runs through the Parisian audience. But we have been warned, in regard to the Italian poet's unusual and imperfect French, that he has chosen to write in the style of Montaigne, and therefore those among us, including myself, who have not read Montaigne are effectively silenced.

And now the poignant situation of the drama holds us again. Sebastian is stripped of his armour, his slender limbs are bare, his narrow, white feet tread lightly on the burning coals, while Debussy's soft music runs over our nerves like chilly water. When the crowd falls on its knees and confesses God, and the white lilies in the garden are transformed into a background of angels, we are entranced and ready to believe all miracles—even that Signor d'Annunzio can write a pure and beautiful play.

Alas! then comes the dreary, interminable, incomprehensible tedium of the second act. In the crepuscular mystery of a "Magic Chamber" strange beings wander and rave and rant, and we understand nothing of what they say. "The Girl that is Ill of Fevers" reveals her wounds and exhibits the winding-sheet of the Saviour. Sebastian wails the following revolting lines:

> Ils L'ont tout meurtri de soufflets. . . .
> . . . . . Sur Ses joues
> Coulent les crachats et le sang.
> Sa bouche est livide et gonflée.
> Ses dents sont toutes ebranlées. . . .

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Seven enigmatical witches wander about in chains, while the signs of the zodiac revolve irrelevantly in the background. Bewilderment and stupefaction settle on the brain of the audience like a November fog.

A long interval, and then Claude Debussy's magnificent fanfare of trumpets arouses us from the depths of our weariness to the realisation that the third act has begun.

And it is in this third act that the enormity, the ultimate literary infamy of d'Annunzio is consummated.

Few things, indeed, that mankind holds sacred have escaped the corrupting touch of this writer. D'Annunzio has described love in "Il Piacere" and in "Il Trionfo della Morte"; and, behold, love has turned to us a face that we knew not, a gross, sinister face, its godliness all faded. He has shown us genius in "La Gloria" and "Il Fuoco"; and genius, at d'Annunzio's blighting contact, has shrivelled into a sullen, selfish dwarf, shrieking itself hoarse in its own glorification, trampling its way to fame over outraged hearts. D'Annunzio's heroes have advocated murder in "Più che l'Amore," have commended infanticide in "L'Innocente." Then the Abruzzese poet—"*O Abruzzo, forte e gentile!*"—who has ventured to call himself the successor of that pure and gigantic Latin genius, Carducci—has turned his eyes in search of other things. What else is held pure and sacred in the heart of mankind? Surely maternal love and the love of brother for sister! So from the thick pages of "Forse che si, forse che no" d'Annunzio has poured pollution upon familiar affections, splashing innocent cheeks with blushes, burning innocent eyes with shame. He has promised us, lest we should miss it in his works, the story of "la madre folle"—a miserable case of insanity and aberrant maternal love. And yet one thing remained, one Figure stood, removed from all others, above all others, white and effulgent, on the summit of the Christian faith.

"Touch Me not." Has Gabriele d'Annunzio not heard the words? Or, hearing them, has he dared to disobey? Does nothing stand too high for his pen to scratch at, for his thoughts and his ink to blot and to smudge and to smear?

This is the third act.

On a throne at the summit of scarlet-carpeted steps sits Diocletian, Emperor of Rome, surrounded by his courtiers, his slaves, his priests, his augurs. Before him, with bowed head, stands the young Sebastian, quiescent, immobile, his slender

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body hardly quivering in its slight raiment of silver and black. The pagan Emperor apostrophises him in the accents of passionate admiration :

Que tu es beau, Sébastien !
. . . . . Que les dieux
Justes conservent ta beauté
Pour l'Empereur, Sébastien ! . . .
Tu te voiles comme la vierge
Qu'on outrage ou celle qu'on va
Egorger. Or je ne veux pas
T'égorger. Découvre ta tête ! . . .
Tu es trop beau.

Sebastian bends a head of smooth black curls beneath the torrent of imperial passion. The Emperor, like the Herod whom we have lately heard snarling his desires to the daughter of Herodias, implores the youthful saint to accept all gifts from him. Even as the Bythinian youth, Antinous, *à la bouche mélancolique*, was worshipped by Hadrian, so will Diocletian shower upon this pale-faced ephebe all his favours. Nay, he, too, shall be made a god. Now let him renounce his faith and sing a hymn to Apollo. But Sebastian refuses. Raising long, lithe arms, and turning a pure Oriental profile to heaven, the " gentle monster " invokes the God of Christianity, the Saviour of mankind. In the equivocal atmosphere of this scene, and spoken in the actress's peculiar throaty and treble voice, the Name, the Name we are accustomed to hear on our children's lips, shocks and appals us. Even in this nvocation an aberrant note is struck :

Avez-vous vu celui que j'aime ? . . .

In the passionate tones there is an intention of evil. The venom is stealthy and subtle. It is undoubtedly the poison of performances such as " Salome " which has led us to this. What we have vaguely dreaded throughout the evening—nay, throughout the past years in which dancing-women, in the name of Art, have whirled with tinted feet over hallowed ground, and have thrust their white hands and pink nails into the locks of a beheaded saint—here reaches its culmination. *Explicit sacrilegium.*

" Je danserai, je danserai," says the androgynous mime,

Je danserai la Passion
De ce Jeune Homme asiatique,
De ce Prince supplicié ! . . .

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And the adolescent saint, under the lusting eyes of the Emperor, *dances the Passion of Christ!*

Scarcely anyone on the first night in the Théâtre du Châtelet realised what they were seeing. They did not understand the words which preceded the "dance"; indeed, Ida Rubinstein's slightly Russian and slightly German accent rendered many of d'Annunzio's interminable *tirades* incomprehensible. The "tout Paris" of the *premières* merely wondered when they saw her, bowed as under some mysterious weight, bending and staggering across the stage; they wondered when she raised her narrow shoulders rigidly as if unseen hands were hoisting her upward; they still wondered as she stretched her thin arms and stood stiff and motionless for what seemed an unendurable length of time, Debussy's mystic music raging round her like a storm; and again they wondered at the sudden droop of the inert head, the lifeless dropping of the bloodless arms, the sinking knees, and final fall of the frail, shattered form. Scarcely anyone understood. "Voilà une danse qui est assez rasante," said a neighbour of mine on the right. "C'est moderne, mais ce n'est pas rigolo," said a neighbour on the left. The boxes and galleries applauded absent-mindedly and feebly. The Iniquity had fallen flat because it had not been understood. Then the curtain descended on the wrathful Emperor and his barbarous passions, on the stained-glass attitudes of the chorus, and on the recumbent saint, buried beneath wreaths of red roses.

The fourth act is short, and portrays the martyrdom of the saint bound to the "wounded laurel tree," and pierced by the arrows of his followers.

* * * * *

On the Sunday after Ascension the doors of the Châtelet were thrown open to the crowds, and a gratuitous performance of the "Mystery" was given. "It has always been my dream," d'Annunzio has said, "thus munificently to bestow upon the people my works." He has had his wish. He, "the master," as he proclaims himself in the preface to "Più che l'Amore," has *épaté le petit bourgeois*. The people who cannot afford to go to the theatre have been allowed to listen to his interminable and magniloquent harangues, to receive the outpouring of his redundant erudition, and to stagger under his assaults upon their moral sense. The poor and the simple-minded have been allowed to see the Russian pantomimist posturing and dancing the Way of the Cross.

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Such is the latest work of d'Annunzio, the man who has written of himself: "From out of my furnaces has come the only poem of total life since Dante. This poem is composed with demoniacal art. . . . He who knows how to read those grand lines of mine finds himself standing on the threshold of the future. . . . I will be and am the master. The attempt to rebel against my spiritual dominion is as base and futile as a revolt of drunken slaves. . . . What power on earth can to-day vindicate itself against my art? . . . How can the servile rancour of the multitude hope, I do not say to prevail, but even to reach to my heels? . . ."

The last words of the moribund St. Sebastian in the play are: "Encore! Encore! Encore!"

Surely the time has come when the literary world should say to Gabriele d'Annunzio: "Enough! Enough! Enough!"

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Book Notices

FICTION

THE WORK OF J. C. SNAITH

MISTRESS DOROTHY MARVIN. LADY BARBARITY. Ward Lock. 1911.
FORTUNE. Nelson. 1910.
ARAMINTA. MRS. FITZ. Smith, Elder. 1910.
WILLIAM JORDAN, JUNIOR. HENRY NORTHCOTE. BROKE OF COVENDEN. Constable. 1906–8.

Perhaps if we knew the exact dates on which the above books were severally written, we should find the duality of the author less perplexing. By virtue of three books published by Messrs. Constable a year or two ago, Mr. Snaith ranks with Messrs. Wells, Conrad, Bennett, and Galsworthy as the fifth great novelist of our age. His other books are amusing, clever, well-written, well-composed—all that's merry and bright; and they bear about the same relation to literature as Mr. Rackham's illustrations do to art. *Araminta* is the best of them—the style is pretty and the idea graceful. But the work is too superficial to pass for comedy: it has not the touch of Meredith's short stories. *Mrs. Fitz*, again, has its good scenes—the naughtiness of the King of Illyria is delightful—but the book is an obvious pot-boiler. The character of Sir Richard Pendragon in *Fortune* is whimsical and stirring; but even in this very jolly book it is obvious that Mr. Snaith does not take himself seriously as a writer of romance: he does not approach his work with the imperturbable seriousness of Dumas or Stevenson. His romances are as void of any undercurrent of thought or passion as those of Cutcliffe Hyne or Conan Doyle. Ingenuity seeks in vain for one fiery outburst from the author of *William Jordan*, for one surpassing phrase to electrify this pleasant business of love and adventure, knights and highwaymen. It is hard to believe that the same pen that wrote such commonplace as *Mistress Dorothy Marvin* has given us two immortal descriptions of heroes who denied the world to save their genius.

What of it? It is enough for one lifetime to have produced *Broke of Covenden*, *Henry Northcote*, and *William Jordan, Junior*. Of these books the first alone has achieved any measure of success or fame: it is the earliest, worst written, and least important. Yet it has fine comedy and profound tragedy. The influence of Meredith is very apparent in the picture of Broke, a more rigid, more passionate, stupider Sir Willoughby Patterne. In one passage, an invocation to the audience at the Olympian Theatre, the author lapses into a travesty of Meredith's

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very style. The tutor, one of Nature's gentlemen and God's poets, who rescues the youngest, most intelligent, and least ugly of Broke's six daughters from the horrors of a *mariage de convenance*, is closely modelled on Vernon Whitford. All this detracts a little from the excellence of the book, and certain abominations of style, which have also to be mentioned, detract from it still more. Take, for instance, this sentence: "a gallant but intrepid hound who took a somewhat informal departure from this life because he chose to cross a railway when hounds were in full cry at the moment the express from London had chosen to cross it also." This is terrible. We hear too, of "a game rejoicing in the euphonious name of ping-pong," and of "that mysterious zoological specimen, the consummate ass." Dickens himself never committed worse excesses than these in the way of cheap irony. And we may add that Mr. Snaith would be well advised to go through all his books and scratch out the word "somewhat" wherever it occurs.

Nevertheless there is grandeur in the scheme of *Broke of Covenden*: it is thrilling to read how blow upon blow fell upon the all but indomitable pride of the hero, and not till the end will he yield. And the characters are more vivid, more passionate than Meredith's; Meredith would never have shown us the fire in Delia's soul. Admirable, too, is Uncle Charles, a bibulous and kind-hearted nobleman, beloved by everyone but his wife, a literary lady who writes for the *Spectator*, whose character the author draws with more ferocity than finesse. In a humorous chapter this insufferable dame is smacked by her long-suffering husband: alas, that the author should add, "not in the authentic place!"

Broke of Covenden may then be classed as a fine book, but imitative; *Henry Northcote* and *William Jordan, Junior*, resemble nothing but each other. Written in a style of fantastic beauty they both describe the soul of genius battling to keep its purity untainted in the material world. They are spiritual tragedies. Already in *Broke of Covenden* the author is apt to make his characters speak, not as they would have spoken, but rather as their souls would have spoken: already in the description of Broke's final desolation we have a foretaste of the author's power of expressing the psychical. "There were occasional fierce gushes of rain driven by the wind against the window-panes of the cottage. He mistook them for waves of blood breaking over the walls of his mind." In the two later books the whole atmosphere is spiritual: the real things are the things of the soul, and the phenomenal world becomes a hideous and obscuring dream.

Henry Northcote is an advocate, penniless, and unknown. In the prelude a dying and destitute stranger who has heard his oratory in Hyde Park comes to visit him. They talk together about Jesus and the need of a new failure, a Great Renunciator like Him "to restore the sense of illusion and to show that the strife for the perfect is not a chimera of the madhouse." The stranger vanishes and the same night Northcote is given his chance. He is to defend a prostitute from a charge of murder: the case seems as hopeless as it is sordid: the woman is guilty beyond all doubt. But to Northcote it seems an unholy thing that a woman should

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be hanged. He exerts his amazing genius and procures a verdict of "Not Guilty." The trial scene is dramatic, and Northcote's speech, with its vision of an ideal jury and Christ as foreman, is great literature. But Northcote realises that he has worked not for his ideal but for himself: his ideal self dies, and the ideal self of the woman he has rescued perishes at the same time. We leave him an incendiary and a murderer, established on the road to worldly success.

The grim story is relieved by passages of a peculiar humour, a humour that reminds one now of Dickens, now of Baudelaire's *Poemes en Prose*, and, like the book itself, baffles all description.

Hard as it is to give an account of *Henry Northcote* in a few lines, it is harder still to suggest the characteristics of *William Jordan, Junior*. Judged by the standard of the soul's grand effort towards perfection, Henry Northcote, the advocate, fails, and William Jordan, Junior, the poet, succeeds, despite imprisonment, poverty, sickness, and ridicule. Mr. Snaith is perhaps the only writer of prose who has understood the poetic character: his prose in its faults and merits is a poet's prose throughout, and the character of his poet must be founded on some mighty experience. The frail boy is brought up by his aged father in a little bookshop: he lives with the heroes of the *Iliad* in a world of poetry and dreams. He is terrified of the "street-people," and as unfit for school or business as a fairy. Yet, gifted with dauntless resolution, he lives down his terrors one by one, and does not die till he has written the poem it was his mission on earth to write. There is nothing in literature like this story of a sublime spirit imprisoned in a wasting frame. Even the humour is unique. Who can ever forget the conversation of Mr. Octavius Crumpett, the publisher, with Queen Victoria's favourite novelist? The novelist is in distress: he has been offered a title. Mr. Crumpett tells him that he should accept it for the honour of literature. The great author acquiesces with a sigh, he says he can hardly imagine *Sir* William Shakespeare. And no friendship in literature is more truly pathetic and charming than that of the poet with the young Matthew Arnold Dodson—an episode which keeps the story human and relieves the mad and stifling tragedy of its close.

In these days those who would proclaim "one genius more" can hardly hope for a hearing, however just their arguments or good their cause. We have no desire to be extravagant in our laudation of Mr. Snaith. He has given us only three books that are literature, and only one masterpiece—*William Jordan, Junior*. But that work is unique, and it *is* a masterpiece: and it is all but unknown.

THE BREAD UPON THE WATERS. By GEORGETTE AGNEW. Heinemann. 6*s*.

A bookful of sloppy sentimentality, redeemed from insignificance by one brilliant joke. The heroine overhears a mare being addressed by her own name, and recognises in the rider the lover of her long past youth! For the last twenty years and more the lover has been the devoted husband of another woman.

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THE BELMONT BOOK. By "VADOS." With an Introduction by ARNOLD BENNETT. Smith, Elder, and Co.

In the republic of letters an author should demand fairness and no favour. Perhaps Mr. Bennett is too modest to recognise the prejudice in favour of a book created by his declaration that "he quite meant to write the book himself." If there were anything in *The Belmont Book* so new or startling that the public might fail to recognise its merits there would be some excuse. But the facts are otherwise. The book belongs to a class with which the public is familiar: it is an echo of a deservedly popular success, *Elizabeth and her German Garden*, but devoid of the insight and sincerity which distinguished its prototype. It is a short book, and much of it is occupied with historical and antiquarian matter, which has no special reference to Belmont, while such part of it as portrays the habits and emotions of the villagers loses its force by passing beyond the limits of the author's experience and information into purely imaginary romance. Though many pages are not devoid of interest, the book as a whole fails to convey to us either Belmont or "our neighbours."

THE RECTOR OF ST. JACOB'S. By "SENEX RUSTICANUS." Stephen Swift. 6*s*.

It is possible that to the eyes of future generations the real drama of the nineteenth century will appear to lie not so much in the material development which has altered the whole external aspect of modern life as in the spiritual alteration of man's outlook upon the universe. Anyhow, it is not surprising that a man whose adult life began with the 'fifties, who witnessed some part of the Oxford movement, and the whole of the crisis caused by the Darwinian theory and its corollaries, sound or foolish, should turn to the difficulties of subscription to a formal statement of religious belief for the material of his first novel. "The Rector" is a rather worldly young man of great practical ability, who deliberately stifles his doubts in order to achieve a position of some authority in the Established Church. His dishonesty soon finds him out, and in a few years he is worried into an early grave. The other characters represent different states of religious consciousness, and each attitude is portrayed, if not profoundly, at least generously and sincerely. "Senex Rusticanus" has preserved into his eightieth year the wide sympathy which is the ideal, if seldom the reality, of the youthful inquirer. We can recommend the book to all who are interested in religious differences.

THE GIRONDIN. By HILAIRE BELLOC. Nelson. 2*s*.

Mr. Belloc is a very versatile card, as the people of Bursley say; he is probably the most versatile card of modern English letters. If you gave him a reasonable half-hour, he would turn you out a rhodomontade in the very tone of Rhadamanthus; if you wanted a curse, encyclical in its reach and terrific in its prohibitions, you might apply to him. He has the tradition and skill of all the literary forms, and he doesn't care a brazen penny piece (like smaller men) for form. He is at his best

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as a conscript of the Church, training her guns and rejoicing in their noise. He can be a pedant—see the discussion of the price of beef in Henry VIII.'s time given in *The Historic Thames*; he can be a poet—mystical, balladist, or local, as you demand; he can be Rabelais plus Stevenson, and remain himself. And now in *The Girondin* he gives you a fairy-tale like Homer, and a picturesque novella like Smollett, and a slice of satire like Erasmus.

Georges Bertrand the Girondin—"the deputy from, or native of, the department of the Gironde, France (dictionary)," as Mr. Belloc guffaws at us from the title-page—is half a fairy and altogether an imp. His wounds die away in a passing night; he talks courteously to horses, and gives blessing to birds, as their brother Francis gave it; he could be Ulysses' tutor for lies and duplicity, and if you cross him, he destroys your house, your wife, your children, and your kindred to the third and fourth remove of cousinship. He loves and possesses the girl Joyeuse; he does not love, but he possesses the spinster de la Roche. The witch, Madame Perrin, puts a spell on him and presses him into the army of the Revolution; and when he is run over by a gun some days after Valmy, you may be sure he goes out to fresh adventures and enters into no condemnation.

In the love-scene of Georges and Joyeuse Mr. Belloc has given us something as admirable, in another kind, as the death-scene of "Mr. Burden."

THE MARRIAGE OF QUIXOTE. By DONALD PRINGLE ARMSTRONG. Martin Secker. 6*s*.

There is a pleasant flavour of the 'nineties about this novel, as if one idly had turned the pages of a yellow book while waiting for one's wife to leave her toilet and fly to a Maud Allan matinée. Many of the characters are so allusive as to become illusive, some are mere conventions. We do not believe that Miss Ginevra Athelstane was really a siren: she sings sharp all the time. Nor does Mr. Wilfred Errington convince; he would never have hanged himself, certainly not before he had served as hero to the literary valeting of Mr. Ranger Gull. You see the ill-effects of Mr. Armstrong upon a reviewer, how he plunges him into an atmosphere of *coteries* and *causeries*. With these faults asterisked, let us be very grateful to the author for his lucid style and a sense of London, the window-box side of which is admirably conveyed. We like Miss Muriel Rivers, and we find her brother charming. Of course, General Rivers was not really their father. One day perhaps Mr. Armstrong will solve that mystery for us, and Mr. Secker will publish it exquisitely with his own inimitable *format*. Meanwhile read, *The Marriage of Quixote*. You will find it full of the gaiety of London mornings. You will hear young people laughing at open windows behind laburnums. You will find sincerity and grace. The book is like a commemoration ball group taken at dawn. There are too many

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characters, but they have enjoyed themselves, and we have enjoyed their representation.

THE BEWILDERED BRIDE. By RANDAL CHARLTON. London, Eveleigh Nash. 6*s*.

A pretty piece of romance this is: a sort of diversion on a penny whistle, with young love, a passionate elopement, an amazing marriage and a virgin wife. The ordeal of that volcanic young poet Harry Monteith is the result of a frankly sensational coincidence: but the narrative is handled so lightly and humorously that we are quite ready to believe it is all, as proclaimed on the title-page, a matter of fact. Mr. Randal Charlton, though the conversation of his "low" characters is not quite convincing, writes a very delicate and limpid English, so that all the glories of the days and nights he describes seem to be throbbing with the beauty of summer trembling in a veil of dew. But he is obsessed with a perverse passion for splitting his infinitives. He does it not by any mere slip of the pen, but evidently on principle and with conscious pleasure. One stumbles over their impaled corpses at every turning. It is true, but not relevant, that Thomas Hardy does it once or twice in *Tess*. It would be interesting to know if Mr. Randal Charlton has anything to say for this horrid habit except that it's clean and there's nothing to pay.

JOHN VERNEY. By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL. Murray. 6*s*.

There used to be a favourite type of English hero who was made of wood. Mr. Vachell reintroduces him in his new novel, for John Verney is wooden in his very virtues. He is what is called, in spite of the philologists, a reliable man, so, of course, he wins his lady and his position in politics in the end. But in the meantime "Demon" Scaife, the vulgar and unscrupulous son of a self-made man, gives him (as the Americans say) the time of his life fighting for them both. Old schoolmates at Harrow, he and "Demon" ultimately become candidates for the same constituency, and it is only because Scaife cannot play fair during the election that the reliable John wins the hesitating lady. As a story *John Verney* is well enough. As a political pamphlet it rehabilitates dukes for the simple-minded. Incidentally, it caricatures Mr. Lloyd George and makes even him seem as though he were made of wood and worked by strings.

A BUDGET OF TARES. By AUSTIN PHILIPS. Smith, Elder & Co. 6*s*.

These are fifteen more short stories by the author of "Red Tape." Mr. Philips is a competent craftsman of the magazine story. Each contains a not too violently dramatic situation treated not too realistically. Mr. Philips adds nothing to the common knowledge of the human heart, and little to our perception of dramatic possibilities. But he is generally interesting in an unpretentious way.

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" Old Sandy " is perhaps the best of them : the story of a " slow, but sure " old teacher who is really the mainstay of a public school, but receives notice to quit at sixty from the hustling young Etonian cleric who has become headmaster. The school lion—a famous general—comes down for speech-day, hears of Old Sandy's dismissal, lectures and threatens the headmaster and council into a change of mind, goes to break the news to Sandy in his well-known den, and finds him asleep—no, dead. It is an excellent theme to illustrate the quiet pathos which is the author's most attractive quality. But " the dress was of a poverty," " all went with a gaiety," etc., etc., are tiresome abuses of foreign idiom which should be avoided.

ESSAYS

CHARDIN. By H. E. A. FURST. With 45 Illustrations. Methuen. 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

Mr. Furst sees the essential in Chardin, but does not always hold his vision to it ; it is a pity he was not able to resist the temptation of talking about so many other things. His monograph is overloaded with disjointed and rather cumbrous theorisings which could well have been exchanged for more of the penetrative appreciation he sometimes shows. Taking Chardin as a typical modernist, to whom painting is the poetry of things visible—the poetry of the eye—he perhaps overstates his case a little ; and, indeed, one might prove according to his principles that still-life is the ideal theme for a painter. The work of Chardin certainly suggests that there is a sense in which it is so. For Chardin, the play of light on a few familiar subjects was a sufficient inspiration ; and it is, of course, the inspiration in his work, and not the source of it, which is of consequence. And yet possibly the poet's eye reveals most when it rests upon the things which we all look at every day as it were without seeing them. For those who can see the light falling like a benediction upon the jug and platter on their table, there is no beauty in the world which they need miss. Such, it would seem, is Chardin's testimony.

LONELY ENGLAND. By MAUDE GOLDRING. Stephen Swift. 5*s.* net.

Few books are more absorbing than those about great lonely spaces, but there are none which make greater demands upon the author. All literature must eventually depend upon its human interest. Anybody, one is inclined to think, could write interestingly about the life in towns—the mere facts of it absorb us. But there is no such intrinsic charm about the mere facts of Earth's changing states and aspects. To interest us they must be transmuted into spiritual agents—we must see them acting on the soul of the artist. Such a book, though it professes to be about the Earth, must be the autobiography of the artist in relation to the Earth, and, more than all other autobiographies, must depend upon the strength and charm of the author's individuality. Only men of remarkable originality can succeed here—men like Richard Jefferies, or Thomas Hardy, or W. H. Hudson. It says little against Miss Goldring's

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literary gifts to declare that she has not succeeded in these essays. They are altogether too vague and slight and impersonal to communicate to us the enchantments of downs and "the unexplored recesses of this world of towns," and they are not redeemed by the mildly mystical stories which run through some of them. "In the exodus," she tells us, "from the villages, it was not only muscle and brain that went, but vitality." She has done nothing to restore it.

POETRY AND DRAMA

THE APOSTLE: A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS. BY GEORGE MOORE. Dublin: Maunsell. 3*s*. 6*d*. net.

There is an old legend to the effect that Jesus did not die at the Crucifixion, but afterwards went into seclusion and lived the life of an Essene monk. To more than one artist this legend has suggested itself as the material for a story or a play, and Mr. George Moore many years ago wrote the scenario for a drama in which Paul is represented as meeting Jesus at the monastery. The play has not been worked out in full. It is only an outline, with some portions of the dialogue complete. Jesus is shocked to find that his life and teaching have been misinterpreted by his disciples; Paul is confronted with the apparent contradiction of his life-work, and, refusing to believe the evidence of his senses, strikes down the monk who threatens his faith.

The most interesting part of the book is the introduction, in which Mr. Moore gives an account of his alleged recent introduction to the Bible.

CONTEMPORARY BELGIAN POETRY. Selected and Translated by JETHRO BITHELL. Scott. 1*s*.

This is a remarkable volume of translations—remarkable not only for the vital stuff which is translated, but for the energy and fitness of Mr. Bithell's renderings. Verhaeren is the greatest of the poets whom Mr. Bithell turns into his fierce English, and he is evidently Mr. Bithell's favourite, for the book is dedicated to him in a sonnet that kneels. There are sixty pages of Verhaeren altogether, some of them not altogether undeserving of the censure passed by Carlyle on Whitman when he said that it was as though the town-bull had taken a pen in his hand. Verhaeren, of course, is no more to be measured in a phrase like that than was Whitman. Perhaps no other living poet has given to literature so majestic and muscular an imagination as we find in his poems of the cities—those mighty interpretations of civilisation as in the light of a blacksmith's forge. Maeterlinck also is here, and Max Elskamp with his exquisite images, singing of "Jesus all rosy and the earth all blue." Then there are the Latinists, Iwan Gilken and Albert Giraud, and the Catholics, Victor Kinon and Thomas Braun, the latter with his "Benediction of the Cheeses." And there are others, ever so many of them, not a few with

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at least a touch of genius. The volume is issued in the Canterbury Poets Series.

CONFESSIONAL AND OTHER POEMS. By WILFRID THORLEY, WITH A PREFACE BY MAURICE HEWLETT. London: Elkin Mathews. 1s. net.

The poems of Mr. Wilfrid Thorley make a very interesting little book —the latest in Mr. Elkin Mathews' Vigo Cabinet Series. They are mostly melancholy and elegiac, the first batch of them, "Confessional," reflecting a personal emotion of moral storm and stress overpast.

Then a few gipsy songs and a few simple "Child Thoughts." Lastly, "Pagan Chants," the best of all in the book. They are truly pagan, possessing, that is, a melancholy beauty of form and sounding a sort of unsatisfied melody.

To read "The Dead Dryad" is to find again the pleasure with which one first heard the sensuous rhyme and Arcadian imagery of the choruses in *Atalanta*. But Mr. Thorley would have lost no fame if he had written nothing else than the "Chant for Reapers," more beautiful than anything else in this little book, and more interesting; because it is the most successful experiment we remember in classical metre. We quote the first two stanzas:

Why do you hide, O dryads! when we seek
Your healing hands in solace?
Who shall soften like you the places rough?
Who shall hasten the harvest?

Why do you fly, O dryads! when we pray
For laden boughs and blossom?
Who shall quicken like you the sapling trees?
Who shall ripen the orchards?

There is a metrical effect here from which a superadded rhyme would actually detract; and that is more than we can say of any other similar attempts in any modern language, with the only exception of some of Carducci's *Odi Barbare*.

As Mr. Maurice Hewlett has written an admirable preface to Mr. Thorley's poems, which makes further criticism a little superfluous, we may be forgiven for dragging him into the discussion, and noticing the distinction between his abandonment in *The Agonists* of all metrical system in favour of a continually varying rhythmical effect, and Mr. Thorley's quantitative stanza, which is as strict as a Latin elegiac couplet. Any discussion of English rhymeless verse depends on an appreciation of this difference.

PHILOSOPHY

THE WORLD OF DREAMS. BY HAVELOCK ELLIS. Constable. 7s. 6d. net.

The obstacle to an exact science of dreams is the difficulty of obtaining evidence, and the impossibility of making experiments. As Mr. Havelock Ellis says, "we only catch our dreams for a moment by the light, as it

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were, of the open door as we are emerging from sleep." But by close observation of his own dreams and the accounts given by others Mr. Ellis has been able to form some generalisations on the subject. The *stuff* of the dream-world, as he finds it, is not radically different from the stuff of the waking consciousness; the dream is not an excursion into a transcendental sphere of being, but a state of consciousness into which direct physical sensations and representative ideas drawn from memory both enter. What, then, is the difference between the dream and the waking state? The logical faculty, the reason, is not absent. Mr. Ellis adduces a host of examples to show that the reason is singularly acute, that "all dreaming is a process of reasoning." What is lacking is the faculty of "attention," the power of the will, the purposive faculty by which idea and desire are translated into action. The dreamer has no control over himself or his world. And yet, still reasoning, he is perpetually trying to account for the confused images which are presented to him.

The extraordinary emotional character of many dreams is explained by Mr. Ellis as a result of this incapacity for translating ideas into action. An idea which is not translated into action is an idea unfulfilled; the natural outlet is closed, and as purposive action cannot result, "the process is transmitted to the brain as a wave of emotion."

Mr. Havelock Ellis is throughout his book profoundly suggestive. Unwilling to admit any supranormal or mystical process in dreams, he nevertheless adds to his scientific method an imaginative insight by which, if he refuses to introduce us too easily to a mystical infinite, he adds infinity to the normal resources of the human mind.

LITERATURE

SHELBURNE ESSAYS. By PAUL ELMER MORE. Putnam's Sons. 5*s*. net.

This volume, by the distinguished editor of the *New York Nation*, includes essays on Wordsworth, Shelley, Tennyson, Morris, on Socialism, Pragmatism, Criticism, and on the Philosophy of Change. Mr. More's critical reputation is advancing, and likely to advance further. It is not his method or his gift to coax us out of our opinions, or to subdue them into agreement with his; we often dissent from him, but not without being forced to consider what are the grounds of our dissent. This is not the least valuable quality of his work. Expressing reasoned, not arbitrary, views, it stimulates thought, and, by the author's wide knowledge and consistent seriousness, braces the reader to a fresh consciousness of the moral, the æsthetic, the philososophic standards which the best criticism implies. A sturdy rather than a "sweet" reasonableness is his vein. Whatever the subject he touches, his ideas upon it repay attention, for they are always vigorous, and they are always his own.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ALFRED AUSTIN: POET LAUREATE 1835-1910. With Illustrations. Macmillan. 24*s*. net.

It is with a delightfully naive seriousness that the Poet Laureate, taking his poetic genius for granted, sets himself to trace its genesis, its

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development and its wonderful flowering. Looking back he finds that from his cradle he was endowed with the faculty which led him naturally to the Laureateship. The call of poetry was "congenital, and the impulse as strong in early as in later years." He quotes many of his boyish poems in full, and playfully admits that they were of no intrinsic value; they were no more than prophetic hints of the mature poetry he was one day to fling out upon an expectant world.

Mr. Austin's career was a varied one. He had means, so there was no need for him to continue his career at the Bar, though he had a gift of speech, he tells us, which promised him success in that calling. He stood twice, without success, for Parliament; he wrote articles for the *Standard*, and was their correspondent in the Franco-Prussian War. He knew Bismarck and Disraeli, was intimate with Lord Salisbury and many great persons, and is able to reproduce a number of interesting conversations and letters. In the midst of a busy life he cultivated his beautiful garden and his indifferent Muse with a success which won him the crown.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. By JOHN MASEFIELD. Home University Library, London, Williams & Norgate. 1s. net.

Mr. John Masefield as a critic is truly excellent. This is a book for people who read Shakespeare, and consequently it is very short—admirably and beautifully short—because Mr. Masefield knows that there is nothing to be said about great poetry except that it is great and beautiful. A young man reading Shakespeare for the first time will need no other introduction than this little book. Mr. Masefield gives us the essential facts of Shakespeare's life in ten pages, and then takes the plays and poems in turn, giving all that need be known about the publication, the plot, and so forth, followed by two or three pages of clear incisive criticism, drawing attention to the particular beauty and general ideas of each. Criticism this, so terse and essential that one reading Shakespeare for the fiftieth time will need nothing further. With Mr. Masefield we escape at last from those intolerable commentators and paraphrasers writing about it and beating the air with a lecturer's wand. His method is necessarily dogmatic, but his is the dogmatism of the poet who understands; and personally we have no wish to dispute the assumption, for instance, that *Troilus and Cressida* is unfinished. His understanding that Shakespeare is a living dramatist and not a dead classic points the remark (on *Measure for Measure*) that "the spirit of Angelo has avenged itself on Shakespeare by becoming the guardian spirit of the British theatre"; and the reflection that "it is difficult to live for a day anywhere in England (except in a theatre) without hearing or reading a part of *Hamlet*." It is a pity that sometimes his manner becomes almost petulant; on the subject, for instance, of the "many graven images" of Shakespeare, which it is unhappy, however much he "abhors in us our human griefs," to call "false as water." But he has written a book of extraordinary value "*pour qu'on lise Shakespeare*," and we would not for anything have it impersonal. On page 69, by the

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way, he refers by a slip to the *Comedy of Errors*, meaning *Love's Labour Lost*.

We hope all the volumes in the "Home University Library" are as good as Mr. Masefield's. But the publishers have been very unfortunate in the production of the series, which is nasty and tasteless: paper and binding are as cheap and sevenpenny as possible.

SOME ECCENTRICS AND A WOMAN. By LEWIS MELVILLE. Martin Secker. 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

Out of all the interesting figures of the Regency to whom this book introduces its readers, the most interesting to many will prove to be Wolcot, who as "Peter Pindar" achieved some fame as a satirist in an age when every writer dealt in satire, and who shares but little in the vices of the period with which Mr. Melville is concerned—and thoroughly conversant. A kindly man was Wolcot, and, though his pen was employed mainly in castigation, the objects of his satiric verse deserved all they got.

That period of the Regency was perhaps richer in vice than in aught else, for gaming and drinking were a gentleman's chief accomplishments; it was also an age rich in wit—early Victorian stodginess showed no signs of birth, but here was a champagne-like effervescence of brilliant speeches and apt remarks, preceding the port-like heaviness and dullness of the next generation. Mr. Melville has given the cream of the wit, and has dwelt lightly on the vice; sometimes, as in the case of William Beckford of Fonthill, he has shown obvious partiality for his characters, but always he has contrived to render them alive and interesting and Georgian. It is a book with an atmosphere, and one to be read not only by students of the period, but by all to whom historical literature appeals.

The papers concerning "Eighteenth Century Men about Town" and "Some Exquisites of the Regency" introduce the chief among the bucks and dandies of the age, and it is in these papers that the general reader will find most interest, for they bristle with witty sayings and forgotten—if ever generally known—epigrams. Brummel, Lord Hertford (Thackeray's Marquis of Steyne), Skeffington, Hervey Ashton, and Henry Pierrepoint are names chosen at random from this collection of interesting rakes, who moved at the pace which George, as Regent, set, or who in some cases set the pace for him. Mr. Melville has caused them to live again, and, recording their vices in a kindly mood, has shown also that they were not devoid of virtues.

A brief foreword announces that the eight papers of which the book is composed have already appeared in various periodicals. All are worthy of preservation in book form, and the reproductions of contemporary engravings and caricature sketches which appear in this volume fittingly complete the Georgian study which it embodies.

THE BIOLOGY OF THE SEASONS. By PROFESSOR J. A. THOMSON. Melrose. 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

It is hardly possible, in the limits allowed by a review, to do full justice to this work by one who has been aptly described as "one of the

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most lucid and able exponents of Darwinism." Professor Thomson has defined his book as "an attempt to get at the underlying principles" of the seasonal drama, and, whether one is concerned with the impressionist sketch in which he epitomises each season, or with the chapters in which a more detailed survey of natural life is made, the motive of the book—the lesson of the seasons—is always evident. Every page bears witness to the fine scholarly work of a scientist in whom is a vein of poetry, and who is well aware of the grandeur of that which he presents, clearly and analytically, to his readers.

From nature to man is the keynote of the work—always its author leads up, points up, and teaches that in the lower world of animal and plant life lies a lesson for humanity. The chapter on "Adolescence" is a book in itself—to take one instance. The book as a whole is profound in spite of simplicity, and is characterised by a reverential attitude in spite of its evolutionary principles. It is a work from which the advanced student may learn, yet so lucidly and ably expressed that the schoolboy, just beginning to grasp the inner meanings of natural life, may find in its pages a story whose sheer charm is more apparent than its value, though the latter is the greater quality. Among standard works on the evolutionary aspect of nature this book well deserves a place.

TRAVEL

Nooks and Corners of Old England. By Allan Fea. Martin Secker. 5s. net.

The author of this book has an eye for the picturesque, as is attested by the hundred photographs which he took in various "nooks and corners," and which accompany and add interest to the letterpress. Unfortunately, some of these photographs have suffered in reproduction, but it is still possible to discern in them all the work of one rich in sympathy with things of other ages.

It is no mere guide-book, but a pleasant, gossipy record of excursions into more than a dozen English counties, with little word-pictures of old country houses, and sketches of history and biography whose subjects range from Mary of Scots in captivity at Sheffield to Dorothy Vernon and Haddon. Yet, although these two quoted at random are well-known subjects, very slight acquaintance with the book is necessary to convince its reader that the author sought for places and legends such as the ordinary tourist misses, and that his search was successful. He is at home among the incidents and legends of the Civil War, and not less conversant with Plantagenet and Tudor memories—he records many sleeps by Queen Elizabeth in his pen-and-ink pictures of country houses.

The attractiveness of the book lies chiefly in its breezy reminiscent style and the variety of its anecdote, not forgetting the hundred photographs. Mr. Fea never wearies his reader, but excites rather a desire to follow in his steps, away from the hurry of to-day to the quiet places and their associations with other times.

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AN OUTPOST IN PAPUA. By A. K. CHIGNELL. Smith, Elder. 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

Mr. Chignell combines the *roles* of missionary and of author in a fashion that is probably as satisfactory to his dusky flock as it cannot fail to prove instructive to his European readers. He possesses in the first place the art of description to a notable degree. His word-pictures of the wild and exuberant mountains and valleys amidst which he dwelt are in themselves sufficient to justify the appearance of the volume. But the author's work exhibits a wider claim to appreciation than this. From out of the pages exudes an essentially human personality—that is to say, one fully as sensible of the humours of life as of its tragic side. A surfeit of the latter was to be expected in a country such as that which surrounded the outpost in Papua; but the wealth of humour comes somewhat as a surprise, and, since its quality is unstrained and genuine, as a very pleasant surprise. It is not to everybody that is vouchsafed the gift of placing at their just value the lighter episodes that come smiling upwards from the gloom of grim and perilous days. There is no lack of either phase in these villages that, although as primitive as ever, are just emerging from their first stage of savagery. Mr. Chignell gives us not only a general description of life as lived in Papua, but adds individual sketches of the more salient local personalities. There is the "man in blue," who is ordinarily met with in his plain loincloth mufti. State occasions see him in the uniform of Imperial authority, "and if something quite out of the ordinary is to be done, he hangs a big brass token round his neck, a shining disc as large as a saucer, with a crown and the letters 'V.C.' in *alto relievo*." There is the history of Sobo, an ardent devotee of nicotine, who set light to the mission-house in a spirit of no ill-will, but merely in order that the confusion might enable him to steal a quantity of tobacco. But it is impossible to enumerate the many pathetic, warlike, and humorous incidents with which the book is filled—from the amazing arithmetic of the native teachers to the ingenuous conduct of the old burned man who, when he walked abroad, left his bandages behind him, lest they should get soiled! The features of many of these village worthies appear in the book, which is admirably illustrated.

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